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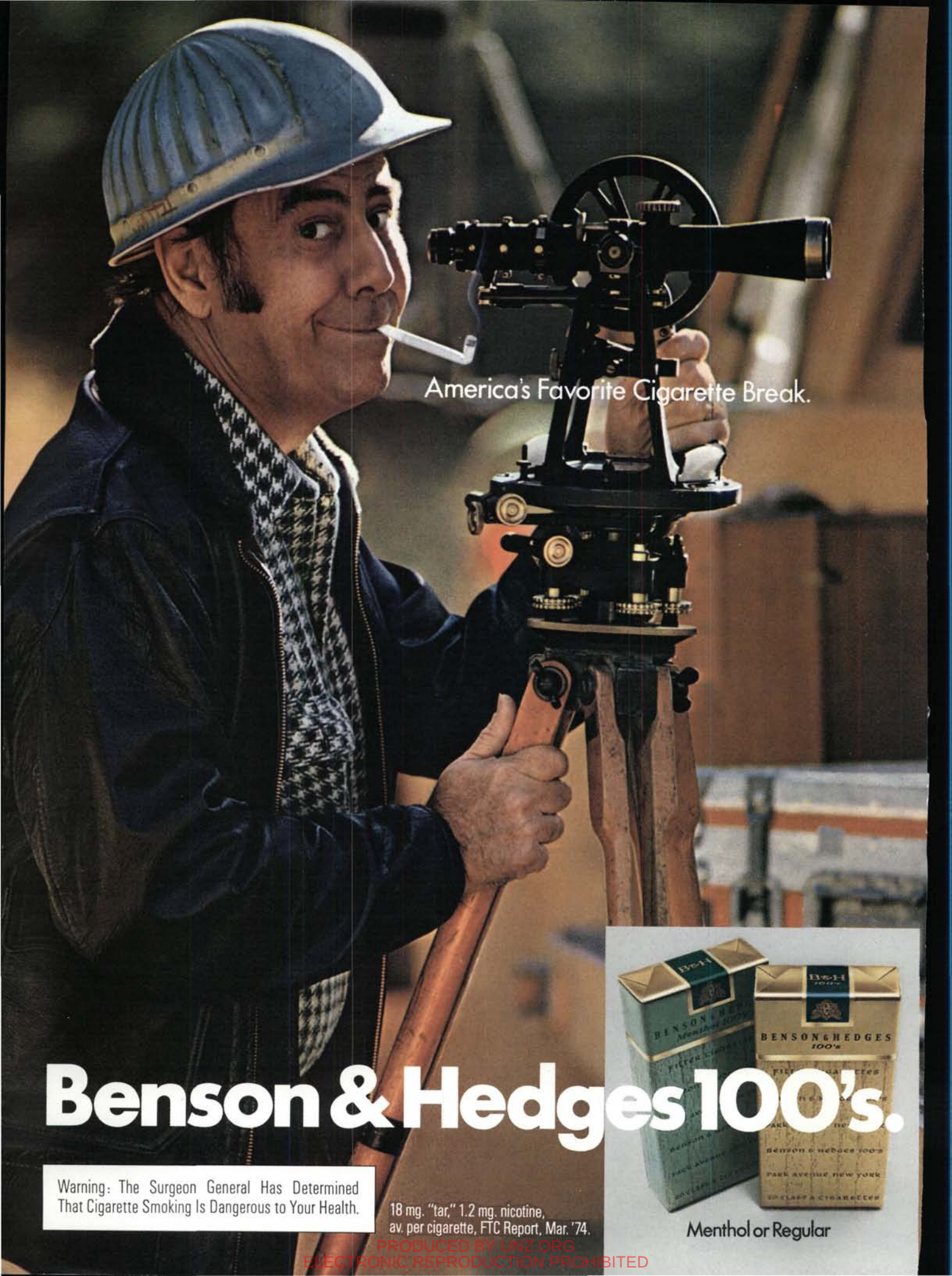


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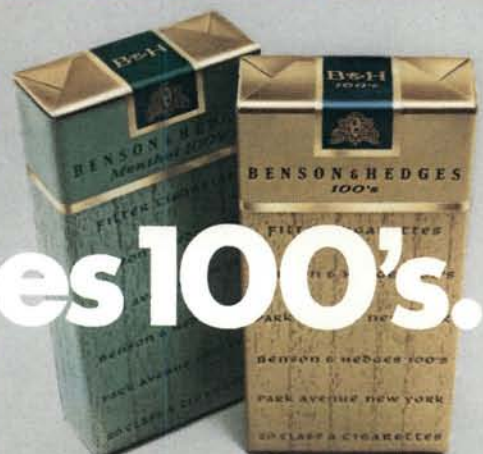
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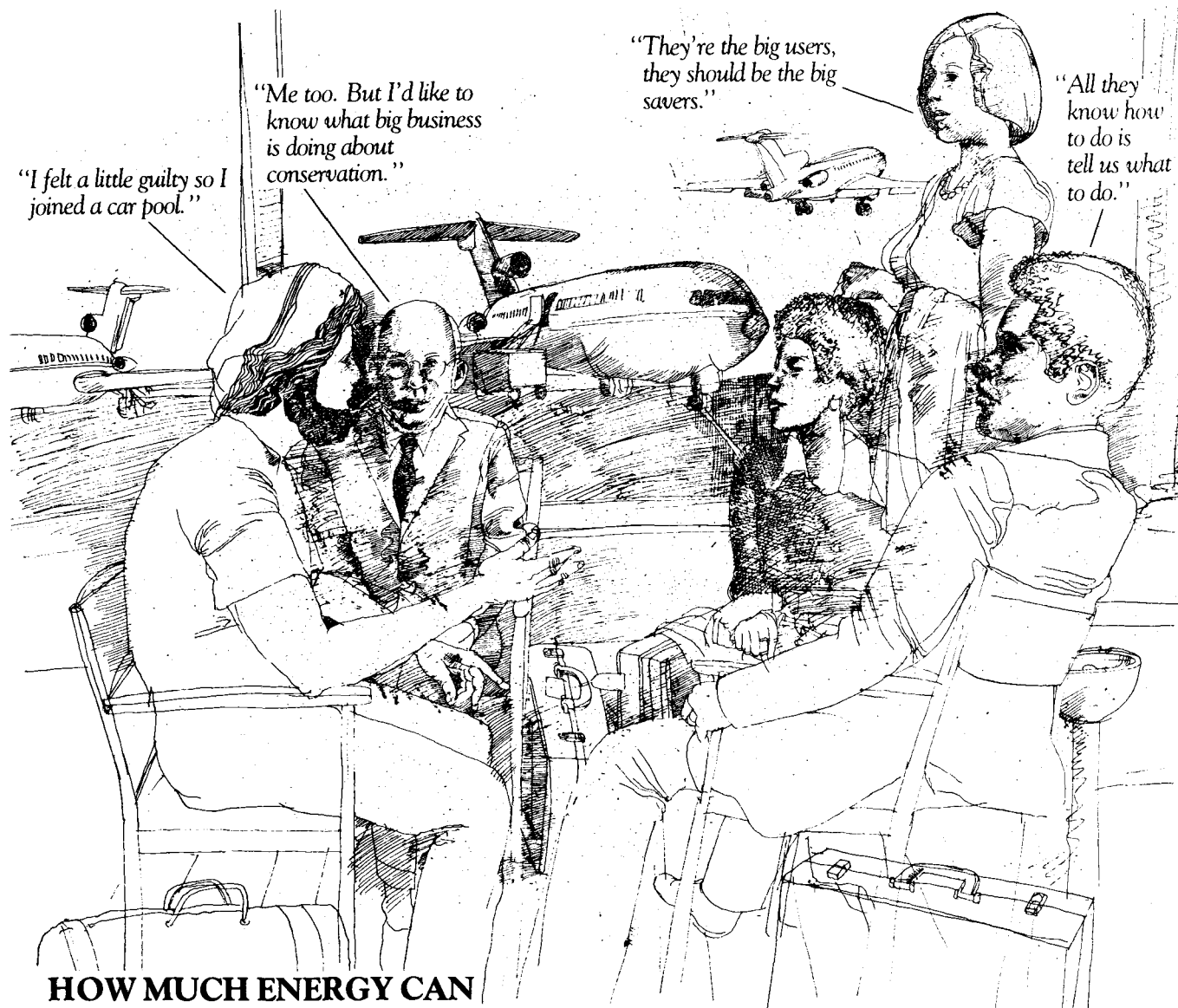
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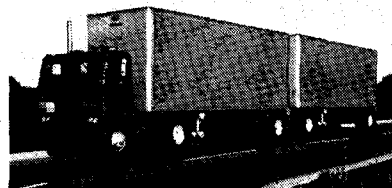
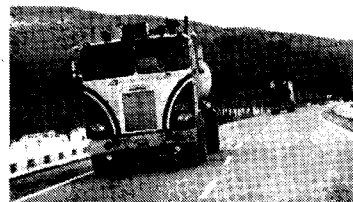
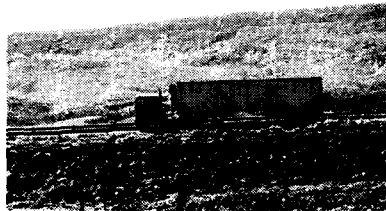
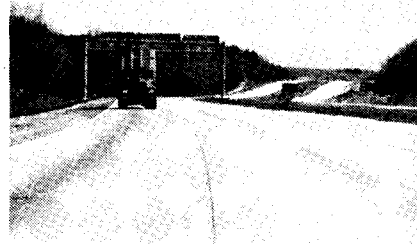
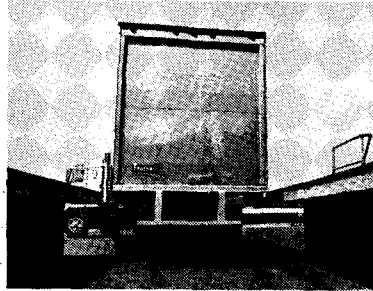
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REPORTS & COMMENT

BANGLADESH

Bangladesh, born of one calamity after another—an appalling cyclone and tidal wave, famine, massacre, war—may be heading for yet another, worse still. No country so far, however poor, has reached the point where millions of its citizens actually die because they have nothing to eat. If there is a place on the planet facing that ultimate nightmare, this is it.

The point about Bangladesh is not merely that it is poor. As the most overcrowded and underfed nation on earth, it has given the word “poverty” new dimensions. One might even say that it is too far gone to be listed among the struggling Third World nations; it heads an emerging Fourth World of young and destitute states kept alive only by heavy transfusions of foreign aid. These are the countries that have raced toward statehood in a burst of nationalist euphoria, only to find that they have neither the means to support themselves nor the allure to be supported in the style to which they might like to be accustomed. They are not the lucky ones that happen to be sitting on an underground sea of oil or a strategically interesting spot on the map. Though they would sink like stones without international handouts, they have nothing but the feeblest humanitarian claims on their benefactors. Nobody needs them, or wants them. What is to be done with them?

It is doubtful whether the 70 million Bengalis of East Pakistan gave the matter much thought when they

broke away to form a state of their own in December, 1971. By then they could think of nothing but escaping from a trap set a quarter of a century earlier with the separation of India's Hindus and Moslems by Partition. Under the Moslem state of Pakistan, the soft, poetic Bengalis of the East were left to the mercies of hard-nosed Punjabi warriors a thousand miles to the west across the Indian subcontinent. The festering grievances of that partnership had been unbearably inflamed by West Pakistan's neglect in 1970, when half a million East Pakistanis lost their lives during the most devastating cyclone and tidal wave in recorded history.

Shambles

The atrocities that followed, as West Pakistan fought to hold the rebellious East, were enough to bring a shocked and sympathetic world to the Bengalis' side. Charges of genocide may have been wildly exaggerated. Though Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman claims that the Pakistanis murdered 3 million of his countrymen, the figure probably came to substantially less than a tenth of that. But after nine months of terror and three weeks of war, the Pakistani army certainly left his country in a shambles.

Ten million refugees had fled to neighboring India during those nine months of wholesale killing, burning, looting, and rape, and returned to find what little they owned in ruins. Six million homes were destroyed, and nearly one and a half million farming families lost their

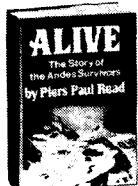
livestock and tools. Three quarters of all the country's vehicles were damaged, wrecked, stolen; railroads were paralyzed, and three hundred bridges were down. Unplanted fields and a severe drought had between them caused a food shortage of at least two and a half million tons. Such industry as the country could boast, mainly the four hundred jute mills earning nine tenths of its foreign currency, had ground to a halt. Among other things, Bangladesh required seven hundred thousand tons of bricks and a hundred thousand tons of steel rods for immediate repairs alone. The estimates were that it would need about \$1.5 billion of foreign aid to get back on its feet.

It has had \$2 billion worth by now. But far from getting back on its feet, it is staggering under increasingly crushing burdens. While most emergency repairs have been taken care of, industry is still lagging so badly that recovery even to modest pre-war levels is not expected much before 1980, if then. Export earnings are so low that nobody knows where the money is to come from for things that simply have to be imported, such as fuel, fertilizer, cotton cloth, and food grains, all costing three or four times more than they did a year or two ago. Meanwhile, in a country whose people live mainly and often solely on rice, the price of home-grown rice has shot up 300 percent since independence. In spite of a bumper crop this year (the first in many years without some natural or man-made disaster), the price keeps going up anyway, and supplies are still short by well over a million tons. Some of the causes might be

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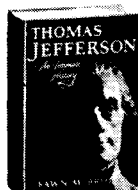
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BANGLADESH

brought under control, in theory at any rate: hoarding, smuggling, and corruption, for instance. But almost all can be traced to an underlying cause very nearly out of control, making it likely that Bangladeshis will continue to pay more and more for their rice with every passing year, and have less and less of it to go around.

Nature is by no means as hard on this land as it may seem. The cyclones homing in from the Bay of Bengal can be terrifying—the one in 1970 devastated an area of two thousand square miles and took half a million lives—and the colossal floods reaching this coast every year from the mighty Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers are probably the most awesome in the world. But the same floods, bearing their priceless silt, have made the soil of Bangladesh incredibly fertile. It surely ought to be able to feed the Bangladeshis, especially since they are too accustomed to poverty to ask for much. “We don’t suffer from rising expectations,” is how Enayetullah Khan, editor of the lively weekly *Holiday*, put it. The trouble is that their expectations are falling.

Preview

Ten years before the breakaway from Pakistan, there were 55 million people in what is now Bangladesh. When the break came, they had grown to 70 million. In the little more than two years since then, they have swollen to 75 million, the world’s eighth-largest population living on three hundredths of one percent of the world’s land. While their numbers have grown by 38 percent in this period, rice production has gone up barely 10 percent—this in a crop year breaking all records. Most Bangladeshis are eating less than they did before independence (down from an average 15.4 ounces daily to 12.9). Nearly half of them no longer eat the minimum supposedly needed to stay alive. The overwhelming majority are so close to the starvation line that their single, gnawing, imperative concern is to find food for the family from day to day. And eight more babies are born there every minute.

At this rate, there will be 150 million Bangladeshis just twenty-three years from now, and over 200 million by the year 2003, creating what one population expert calls “an unprecedented situation for mankind.” Bangladesh has a territory the size of Iowa, half of it under water during the floods and monsoon rains; and with personal incomes averaging \$50 a year, it is so wretchedly poor that aid experts have had to invent a new category for it—a “Relatively Less Developed Country,” they call it. Plainly it doesn’t have the living space for so many people, still less much chance of feeding them. “Even doubling the population on Bangladesh’s limited land space is a disturbing prospect,” says its Planning Commission. “A trebling is frightful to visualize.”

Just how frightful that could be may be judged from the preview offered by Bangladesh as it is already.

From the air it seems a paradise of abundance, with its thickly wooded Hill Tracts in the southeast and the luxuriant jungles of the legendary Bengal tiger in the southwest. Sunderbahn, laced with silvery streams and man-made waterways, crisscrossed with brilliant green paddy fields blanketing the vast deltaic plains, dotted with the snug thatched roofs of village *baris* clustered in the shade of tall coconut palm trees. From the ground, the paddy fields turn out to be incredibly tiny, and the *baris*—housing perhaps fifty or sixty members of related families—shockingly bare of creature comforts and the smallest scraps of food. Nevertheless, unless you actually visit some *baris*, as I did around Comilla, you might wander for days through this smiling countryside without suspecting the privation masked by its bright foliage.

In the cities, though, the human landscape is one of unrelieved and unforgettable misery. Even in the Orient there are few national capitals to match Dacca for squalor. Apart from a single modern hotel, the Prime Minister’s palace, and one or two outlying suburbs reserved for government big shots and the diplomatic corps, Dacca is a steamy slum of cracked and grimy office buildings and hovels passing for shops with little if anything to sell. Clotted sewage and garbage

crawling with vermin lie in the gutters unnoticed. Lepers, grotesque cripples, and indescribably ragged children swarm to any car stopping at a curb or traffic light to beg for pennies. The great majority of the capital’s 2 million inhabitants are housed in ramshackle tenements or thatched lean-tos called *bustees*, without running water or sanitation; about one in every ten persons is not housed at all.

Day in, day out, families carrying all their worldly goods in small bundles on their heads wander the streets in search of a place to settle for the night. From Tongi in the north to the Buriganga River embankment in the south, from Basabo in the east to Mohammadpur in the west, beside the railway tracks in the Badamtolly Ghat area, and along the bylanes of downtown Motijheel, some two hundred thousand people sleep in long lines or circles, on footpaths, at bus stops, on staircases and verandas, on railroad platforms, under trees.

Described by one Daccan as “vagabonds, unclaimed children, mini-hawkers, street-magicians, lunatics, dope addicts, and hippies,” they live by begging, pedaling bicycle rickshaws, hawking peanuts, dhal, curry, and *ruti* (a small unleavened bread baked without oil), shining shoes, taking the place of horses to pull heavy carts, stealing, prostitution, and part-time domestic work such as washing dishes or grinding spices. The men I met among them may earn fifty cents a day if they’re lucky, the women three or four dollars a month.

They are always hungry. Most of those I met seldom ate more than a handful of rice a day with perhaps a single onion or chili, cooked over fires made with old tires and rubbish. Rummaging through dustbins for food and fighting over scraps is commonplace; and no scrap is turned down, however unappetizing. In the Chowdatooly colony of sweepers, former Untouchables from India who have been gatherers of night soil in Dacca for generations, I saw several children standing knee-deep in an open sewer, hacking away at the bloody and maggoty carcass of an old bullock. After a lifetime of drawing the sweepers’ carts, the bullock had been lying around dead for days, while the

government inspector waited for his customary bribe to have it hauled away.

I had thought that Chowdatooly was where human beings had hit bottom. But I had not reckoned on the Kazi Quader's building in Hatkhola Road. Planned as a high-rise hotel in old Dacca and abandoned during the war with construction work half finished, the building has been occupied ever since by close to a thousand squatters. The ground floor, when I came in, was coated in slime. Every inch was occupied by men, women, and children sitting or lying listlessly on filthy rags or straw. The air stank of excrement, urine, rotting garbage, and pus. Within two minutes of entering the premises, I counted fifteen cases of raging smallpox. Cholera was endemic. Almost everybody I questioned suffered from skin or intestinal disease, anemia, life-threatening malnutrition. "You're asking about our health? We're all dying, just waiting to die," one said. Four out of five babies born here die, in fact, before they are a year old.

People like these are drifting into the cities in the thousands: the urban population of Bangladesh is rising by 10 percent a year. It was not long ago that many or most were still working in the countryside, on somebody else's farm or their own. To this day, some have clung to their last fragmented holding of a few *kathas*, a *katha* being a sixteenth of a third of an acre. Like millions of others, they have been driven toward the cities because the land cannot support them anymore. Some have been wiped out by cyclones, tidal waves, floods, erosion. But far more have been squeezed out by relentlessly rising population pressures, causing the size of holdings to keep shrinking as there are more mouths to feed. By now, left-wing terrorists have taken to condemning and executing owners of a mere three acres as "big" landlords. The average farm size is down to 1.7 acres, and half the holdings are less than a single acre.

Since no holding that small can support a pair of bullocks, they are worked by hand with primitive plows and hoes. It is hard to see how, on a farm like that, the most undemanding of Bengali families with seven or eight children can

keep body and soul together; and one in every three Bengalis has no land left at all, or any other way to earn a steady living.

Beset by such anguishing problems, the nation's young and inexperienced government has, if anything, compounded them.

Friend of Bengal

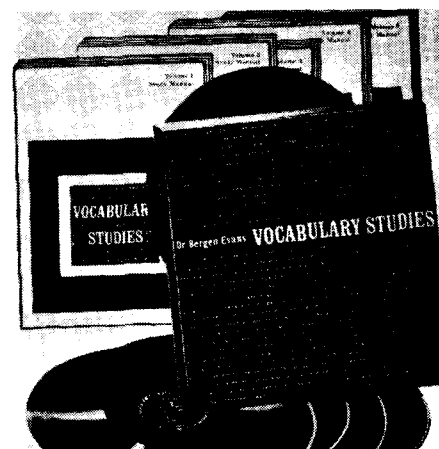
Few other men in history have come to power with the kind of popular mandate Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had. The half-million crying, laughing, shouting, deliriously excited Bengalis who met him at the airport after his release from a Pakistani prison at the war's end would have done anything for their folk hero and followed him anywhere. Even now, many are reluctant to renounce their faith in the Bangabandhu, the Friend of Bengal, who led them so gloriously to nationhood. But the faith is visibly wearing thin.

It is hard to meet Sheikh Mujib without succumbing at least a little to his charm. In his mid-fifties, he is the quintessence of the romantic Bengali image: passionate, impulsive, courtly, generous, talkative, gay. Unfortunately, he is also remarkably irresolute for a man whose whole life has been spent, in and out of prison, defending the elementary rights of his people. "His decisions, when he makes them at all, are likely to depend on whoever gets to him last," a close associate remarks. "He is also congenitally unable to say no. And since he seems unwilling or unable either to delegate authority or use it properly himself, he is a really terrible administrator."

Furthermore, he can hardly be described as much of a political thinker. For all his heroic defense of the Bengalis under Pakistani rule, he never formulated a coherent plan for independence until events positively thrust the independence upon him. Nor has he infused the Awami League, which came to power on his coattails, with a burning interest in ideology of any sort. Its members, mostly ward heelers of classic stamp, seem to care very little about moving to the right, left, or center, or anywhere else save where the pork barrel happens to be.

Such as it is, the ideology guiding

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BANGLADESH

them is what Sheikh Mujib calls Mujibism, a confused experiment in secular democratic national socialism which can reasonably be written off as a flop, especially the socialist part. This consists of a blanket nationalization order issued barely three months after independence, covering 85 percent of the nonagricultural economy: all domestically owned banks and insurance companies, most shipping, and all textile, sugar, and jute mills. Every one of these enterprises is now losing money. The banks are so heavily in the red that they are refusing to throw good money after bad in further loans to the public sector industries. The jute mills, Bangladesh's export lifeline, have slipped from an average pre-war profit of \$39 a ton to an average loss of \$212 a ton. The Adamjee jute mills, the largest in the world, are losing \$30 million a year.

Wartime disruption can no longer be blamed for this, foreign aid having more than made up for it. One

reason is a perennial and pernicious power shortage, largely the result of administrative inefficiency, with factories hit by power failures ten and twelve times a day. Another reason has been a succession of easy victories for the National Labor League, not only doubling wages in just two years but padding payrolls so thickly with unnecessary and "ghost" workers that the Labor League's leader has become one of the richest men in Dacca. But the biggest cause is mismanagement.

No sooner did Sheikh Mujib nationalize industry than he fired the top personnel and put in his own political appointees from the ruling Awami League. None were qualified for their new jobs, and many seemed highly unqualified. The one he put in charge of the whole jute industry, for example, had been fired in 1970 by the Pakistanis for corruption. (So had the man who is currently Mujib's closest governmental adviser.)

By now the nation's entire political and administrative structure is shot through with such appointees. Not many show much concern

about the work at hand. Such is their reluctance to risk the Sheikh's displeasure that the most trivial matters—issuing a nonpolitical visa, say—end up on his desk. But they have been quick to learn how to take care of themselves. Corruption may be unavoidable in any country, but it has hit Bangladesh faster and harder than most. In a "spoils system gone mad," as the London *Economist* calls it, the public official is rare here who doesn't have his hand in the till. "You have only to offer some functionary a bottle of whiskey and \$10,000, and all he'll ask is 'Where do I sign?'" a prominent editor observed to me bitterly. "They're bleeding us white." Not long ago, to cite any of a hundred cases, a ship carrying 18,000 tons of desperately needed cement reached Chittagong Harbor with only 1100 tons; the rest had melted away when the ship "sprang a leak," the captain said. Shortly afterward, another ship sent by the European Common Market unloaded 14,000 tons of wheat in Chittagong, whereupon 10,000 tons of it promptly vanished.

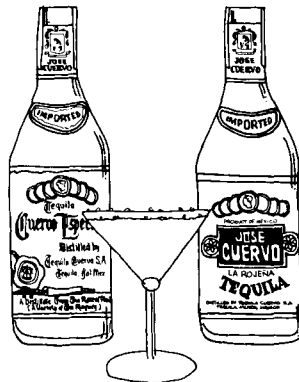
Hanky-panky

With happy-go-lucky methods such as these, a new class of millionaires has emerged overnight, getting richer by the minute at their countrymen's expense. Whether employed directly by the regime or heavily dependent on it for protection, they have a strong vested interest in it. As things are going, they may soon be the only Bangladeshis who do.

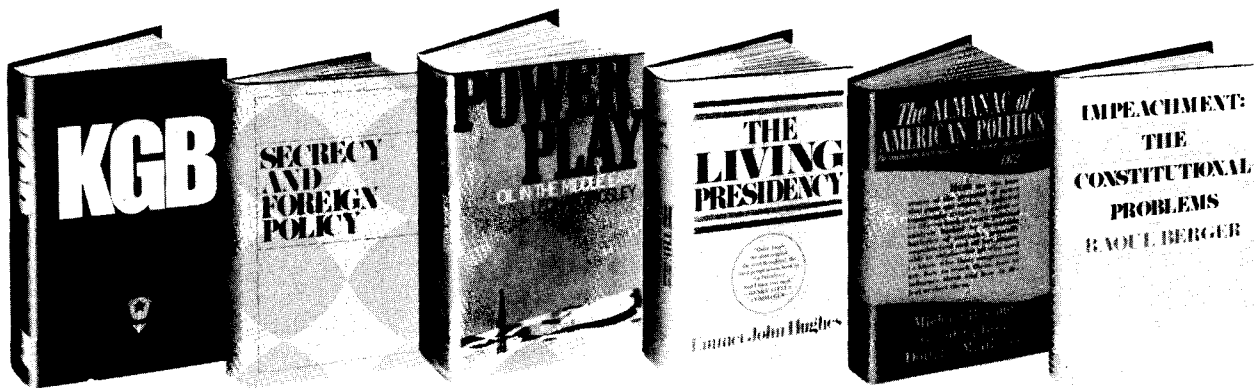
Barely a year ago, in Bangladesh's first national elections, Sheikh Mujib's Awami League won 90 percent of the popular vote and 307 out of 315 parliamentary seats. While there may have been a little hanky-panky with the ballot boxes at the time, it was nothing like the kind that would be necessary now to get the same results. "For a long while, we refused to believe that Sheikh Mujib was aware of what was going on around him, still less that he had any personal part in it," a distinguished Bengali intellectual told me. "But he'd have to be deaf, dumb, and blind to be all that innocent all this time. If he is, he shouldn't be running the country. If

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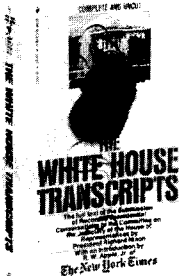
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BANGLADESH

he isn't . . . well, he can't have it both ways."

Though almost anybody you come across in Dacca says something of the sort, this is far from meaning that all Bangladesh is up in arms against the Bangabandhu—yet. The opposition, what there is of it, is disorganized and fragmented. There are six distinct Communist parties, a socialist party, and four "mass" parties opposing the Awami League, each with its own peasant, labor, youth, and student wings; and the best-known opposition leader, a fanatical Moslem Maoist known as the Maulana Bashani, is over ninety. Nevertheless, popular disenchantment is unmistakably spreading; the unity and self-imposed discipline of a nation fighting for its freedom have given way to disorder and ugly violence; and the Sheikh's response, increasingly brutal, reflects his mounting concern.

Nobody knows how many murders are committed daily in Bangladesh; most of them are no longer reported in the press. By last official count about a year ago, they were running to four or five a day. By now, reliable sources think, the daily figure is closer to forty or fifty. Many are the work of *dacoits*, armed thugs roaming the countryside and city streets to kill for simple plunder. But at least 3000 politicians either representing or opposing the Awami League have been assassinated since independence, and the same sources believe that the 1974 score will be at least as many again.

"Who's our leader?"

It is hard to draw a clear line between the two kinds of murder. Plenty of *dacoits* have political sentiments of a sort, often singling out a hated village moneylender or rich landlord and literally tearing him limb from limb; and quite a few politicians here seem to have dacoity instincts. Whatever their motives, the killers have no trouble about laying hands on a gun. Despite the Sheikh's urgent appeals when the war was over, at least a hundred thousand Bengalis who had picked up weapons during the

emergency never did turn them in. This is particularly true among the young freedom fighters in the Mukti Bahini. Demobilized without glory, and passed over with singular lack of foresight when the plummy post-war jobs were handed out to the Sheikh's Awami Leaguers, they are broke and bitter. "Would you fight again if Sheikh Mujib asks you to?" I asked a group of disabled veterans camping together in a tumbledown Dacca shack. They roared with laughter. "And who's our bloody leader, boys?" one called out raucously. The laugh was more menacing this time.

There is little doubt that a number of these youths have fallen in with the *dacoits*. As a high police officer confirms, however, there isn't much doubt either that many are falling in with those whose interest in arms is political. On the pretext of "crushing miscreants"—common criminals, that is—the regime is going after such opponents, active or potential, real or imagined, with sledgehammer tactics. The regular police are too poorly trained and equipped for this work. Instead, Sheikh Mujib relies heavily on two paramilitary formations: his nephew Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni's Youth League, whose one hundred thousand armed toughs are engaged in a national "purification drive"; and his personal security force, the Rokhi Bahini. Deliberately trained to be ruthless, it is the Rokhi Bahini that terrorizes the populace. They break into factories, holding workers at gunpoint when a slowdown occurs and putting labor leaders under surveillance; they impose sudden curfews in villages to make house-to-house searches for hidden weapons (and, incidentally, collect overdue gas and light bills and taxes); they arrest people without warrants, questioning them under a torture so relentless that several are known to have died.

By now, the regime no longer bothers to keep up the fiction that this is a virtuous law-and-order campaign. Its purpose was stated bluntly by the Awami League's General Secretary not long ago: "The government will annihilate elements threatening to overthrow it by armed struggle," he said, shortly after the Rokhi Bahini had fired on a crowd of demonstrators, killing

three and wounding seven. "Unwanted people engaged in destructive activities will be exterminated."

This may hardly be what the Bangabandhu's devoted followers had expected from a folk hero fond of telling reporters, "My strength is that I love my people, my weakness that I love them too much." But it is the classic reaction of a politician coming to power after a lifetime in the opposition, only to be faced with all the lacerating problems he used to blame on the other fellow.

The problems are not necessarily beyond solution. As Prime Minister Mujib points out himself, "Bangladesh is a wonderful land. I have jute, rice, tea, fish, forests, tobacco, cotton. I have fruit, mangoes, lychees, oranges, pineapples, bananas, betel nuts . . ." At present, though, this wonderful land is cultivated in such primitive fashion that rice yields here are among the lowest in the world. While food production could be boosted enormously, it would take generous supplies of fertilizer and fuel for irrigation pumps, a competent agricultural extension service, modernized social services, farmers' cooperatives, a purposeful government, and a lot of money.

Five-Year Plan

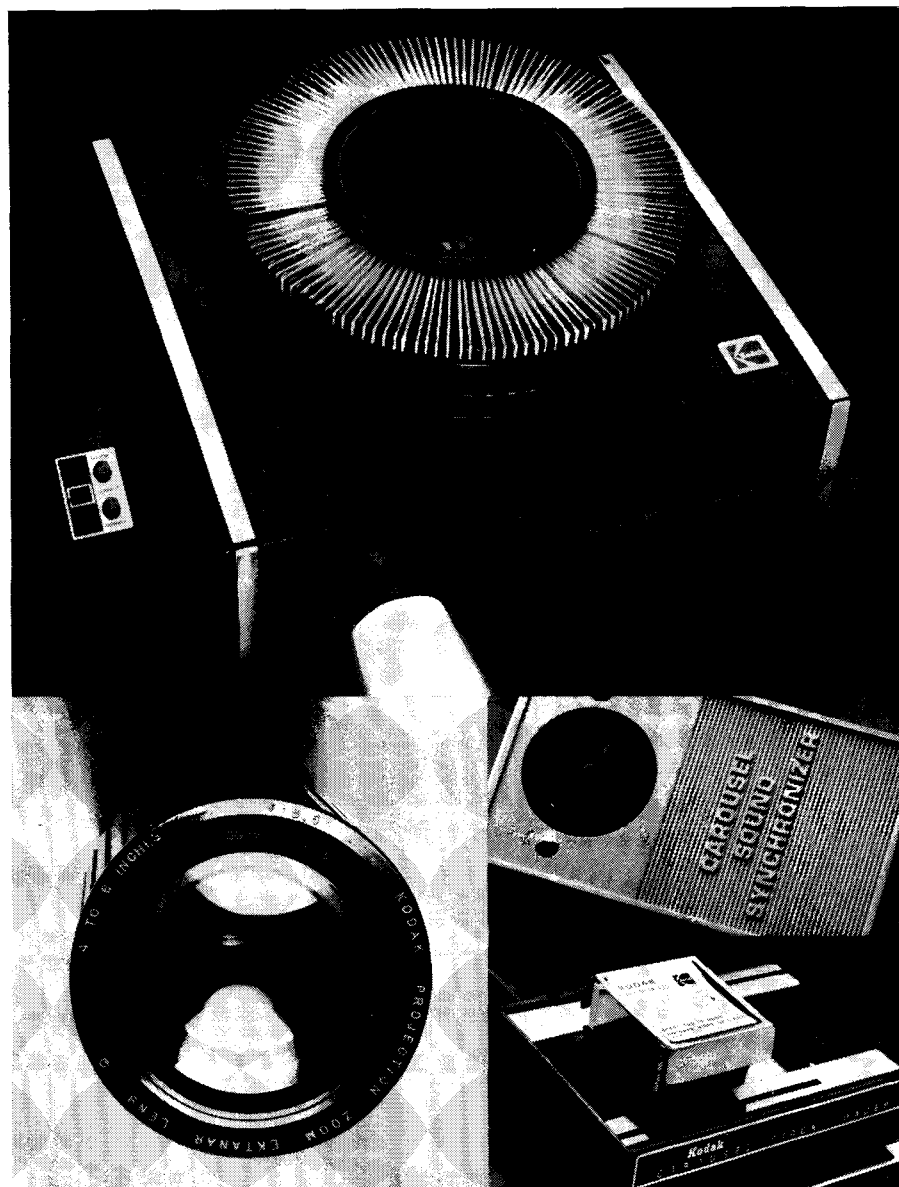
Even supposing the government could take care of everything else provided it gets money enough—a very large supposition—the money is a formidable problem. Experts estimate that Bangladesh would need \$16 billion of foreign aid to become self-supporting by the turn of the century, and this only if it can get the birthrate down from over 3 percent yearly to around 2 percent. If the birthrate does not come down, it will "need more aid than is plausible," according to a World Bank report. How much more that could run to may be judged from the fact that Bangladesh will have to spend an extra \$87 million in hard currency this year just to import food for the extra 2 million people born here in 1974. Presumably, next year's batch of babies will double this extra bill to a stunning \$174 million—nearly half the country's present export earnings—with the figure rising inexorably thereafter.

Obviously Bangladesh is going to have to do something about its

birthrate, and fast, before the horrors of widespread death by starvation are upon it. The authors of its first Five-Year Plan, published last autumn, fully realized how urgent this is "for the sheer ecological viability of the nation." In proposing a \$90 million five-year family-planning campaign, they warned that even this might not be enough. "We must consider the imposition of progressively increasing punitive measures" especially after the birth of a family's second child, they wrote. Among the measures they mentioned explicitly were restricted ration cards and access to state-controlled fair-price food shops, legalized and free abortion, a steep rise in the legal marriage age (women usually marry here at thirteen), the emancipation of women generally, and even compulsory sterilization. Yet it is with less than unbounded optimism that international agencies and local authorities alike are approaching the nation's new family-planning program. It is not easy to sell the notion of birth control to people who have no old-age insurance, no money to save against a rainy day, no tractors to work their land, almost no joys in life except sex and their children, and, in some remote rural areas, not even a very clear idea of where babies come from. A good many also seem to think that they ought to have religious scruples in such matters, though neither their majority Moslem nor minority Hindu religion says so.

All in all, family planning is no vote-getter in this country or any like it. The late President Mohammad Ayub Khan of Pakistan, who pushed hard for it anyway, fell from power in good part because he did. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India, too shrewd a politician to make such a mistake, has never committed herself personally to a campaign on which her own government is spending upwards of \$100 million a year. Sheikh Mujib, no slouch himself as a politician, has yet to utter a word on the subject. Since nothing of consequence gets done in Bangladesh without the Bangabandhu (or with him, some say), family planning here can scarcely be said to have gotten off to a flying start.

Meanwhile, the chances of speed-



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BANGLADESH

ing up economically to keep abreast of the growing population get bleaker by the day. Two thirds of Bangladesh's first Five-Year Plan was supposed to be financed by foreign aid, including \$700 million for 1974 alone. But it will be lucky to get half that much. By the time the plan was published, foreign-aid sources were already drying up fast, largely because of the worldwide energy crisis. By now, the same crisis has backed this luckless nation into such a corner that the whole plan has gone right out the window.

At prevailing international prices, Bangladesh will have to pay \$125 million in 1974 for oil supplies that had cost \$25 million in 1973, while another \$250 million, at rock-bottom reckoning, will have to go for imported food grains. These two items alone will exhaust its export earnings. Not a penny will be left over for imported fertilizer, without which the nation will go still hungrier next year, not to speak of spare parts, irrigation pumps, and other indispensable machinery, and enough cotton cloth for the world's least exigent people to buy perhaps a single cheap cotton lungi or sari.

Little thanks

This staggering new blow has come at just about the time when the aid-giving states were preparing to phase out disaster relief and shift to development assistance. Inasmuch as the one appeals far more to our heartstrings—and therefore to our purse strings—than the other, the transition was going to mean deep cuts in aid allocations. The United States, for instance, is expected to contribute only about \$25 million this year for development, whereas it has contributed \$443 million in the two previous years for food relief. But in a country whose past and future appear to consist of one long disaster, it is no simple matter for aid-givers to get out from under.

So far the burden has been carried mostly by India, the United States, and the Soviet Union. None of the three has found the going easy, India least of all. Not exactly flush itself, the Indian government very nearly went bankrupt by tak-

ing in 10 million Bengali refugees during the nine months' terror and sending its own army to throw the Pakistanis out of East Bengal in the end. The net cost of these efforts, allowing for foreign contributions, doubled India's deficit in 1971 from an anticipated \$300 million to \$600 million, and it has chipped in another quarter of a billion dollars since then. Predictably (all donor states learn it the hard way) the Indians are getting little thanks for their pains. Whatever troubles the Bangladeshis can no longer blame on Pakistan now tend to be laid at India's door: a multimillion-dollar contraband trade in rice and jute, smuggled over unguardable borders to Calcutta; a thriving black market in Indian rupees, considered a hard currency compared to the Bangladesh taka; "organized looting" by the Indian army of electric motors, spare parts, jute machines, trucks, typewriters, telephones. Meanwhile, the country's overwhelmingly Moslem population is tending to take its frustrations out on the 10 million Hindus who were stranded here when the partition lines were drawn a quarter of a century ago. The Hindus are regarded as being "more Indian" than the Moslem Bengalis (who were Indians too, before Partition); the Hindus are therefore living on increasingly uncomfortable terms with their neighbors.

The United States, having taken Pakistan's side openly during the war, seemed unlikely to fare much better than India has in relations with Bangladesh. Despite the 550,000 tons of American food sent as a gift, students passing the USIS library in Dacca usually stop to heave a brick at the windows—sixty-nine panes were broken on one unusually busy day. The *New York Times* reported in 1972 that "the U.S. has given more food aid and received less public credit for it than any other nation." Yet, by thoughtfully keeping their heads down and aid levels up, American diplomats here have become surprisingly popular. How long that will last if their heads come up while the aid goes down is another question.

The Russians are not doing as well. With a couple of thousand advisers and a \$200 million program, their aid mission here is one of the

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biggest they have in the developing world. But if several Soviet projects may be considerably more useful in the long run than our own food shipments, long since eaten, they are causing more controversy. Among the Soviet projects are a large thermal power station, two radio stations, an electrical equipment plant, ten modern deep-sea fishing trawlers with a training program for local crews, and a dredging fleet to clear the Chittagong port of ships sunk during the war. This last is an especially "noisy" one, I was told by the head of their aid mission, Anatoli Zverev, with something close to a wink, referring to scurrilous rumors here that the Russians are dawdling on the job in Chittagong until they get a chance to set up a naval base there. An even noisier one, which Mr. Zverev didn't happen to mention, is the squadron of MIG-27's which the Russians have sent, only to keep the planes so jealously guarded by Soviet military advisers that local pilots can't get near them. Apart from complaining loudly about this, the Bangladeshis keep picking on the Russians for everything else from tacky equipment, poor business practices, and sharp barter deals to exploitation of national resources (mostly having to do with shrimps from the Bay of Bengal, hauled in by Soviet trainers on these trawlers and sold to the United States at a nice little profit).

All the same, it seems evident that Sheikh Mujib is getting in pretty deep with the Russians. He has even brought members of two small and apparently tame Communist parties into his government, though he took the precaution of giving them no ministerial posts. How much deeper in he gets will probably depend on whether or not he can find anybody else more willing and able to prop up his country. It was doubtless with this in mind that he agreed to restore diplomatic ties with Pakistan at the Moslem summit last March. While a lot of his fellow Moslems from the Arab oil states were there, they have yet to offer him even pin money.

Though patrons for the nonce, none of these donor states actually takes the consuming interest in

Bangladesh that had seemed in the offing at its birth. The Indians are by no means as sure as they once were that an independent Bangladesh would leave their arch-enemy, Pakistan, hopelessly crippled. Not only has Pakistan survived the amputation very well, but after the reconciliation at the Moslem summit meeting, it appears to be appreciably closer than India is to a special relationship with Bangladesh in trade and diplomacy. The United States, all too familiar with this biting-the-hand-that-feeds-you syndrome, has refrained nobly from saying "I told you so." On the whole, though, American diplomats here show surprisingly little concern about whether the Bangladeshis latch on to India or Pakistan in the end. Naturally, they are rather more concerned about whether, or to what extent, Sheikh Mujib may latch on to the Russians. But even this depends on how the Russians may feel about throwing good rubles after bad once Communist China gets into the act here—as it is evidently preparing to do—ruling out any remote chance of making this a Russian province.

Dilemma

The sad truth is that Bangladesh lacks the charms that might bring in a handsome income from competing powers on the international stage. Geographically, geologically, politically, it has nothing much to offer a foreign patron. All it has is people: half starved, dirt-poor, and multiplying at a terrifying rate. Left to themselves, they could be heading for a tragedy unparalleled for the human race. "This population with its reserve base cannot grow indefinitely," says a distinguished population analyst for the Ford Foundation, Lionel Chen. "Either the birthrate must go down, or the death rate must go up." There is no mistaking what would force the death rate up: mass starvation.

There is no dodging the fact, either, that Bangladesh's dilemma is our own. It may be impractical to go on propping up a country like this with billions of dollars that might as well be thrown to the winds. But it is plainly unthinkable to let a nation of 75 million human beings—doomed to become twice as

Harold's Eye Myth or History?

BY JOHN LETTS

Every schoolboy knows the story of the Norman arrow, fired high into the air, that pierced King Harold's eye at the Battle of Hastings. But its first appearance in history was not till 1176; and most probably, arose from a careless reading of the last section of the Bayeux Tapestry, shown on the right.

Yet the tapestry remains our best source of reliable information about the Battle of Hastings, the earliest written account (that of Guillaume de Poitiers) coming, most probably, a decade or so later.

Dr. Lewis Thorpe's new book, *The Bayeux Tapestry and the Norman Invasion* (published by The Folio Society) is the first to bring them together: an extensive translation from Guillaume de Poitiers, and the entire 214 foot tapestry, reproduced in continuous format in full colour. Nothing published before has quite done justice to this extraordinary heirloom of the past: unique

not only for its great artistic skill but also for the wealth of information it provides on contemporary life and as our earliest evidence about the events surrounding the savage and primitive battle fought on Saturday, 14 October 1066, and the Norman



At left, an arrow is shown at the eye or helmet of an English Knight. But today, Harold's death is usually assumed to be depicted on right.

invasion which preceded it—events of the first importance in the whole development of modern Europe.

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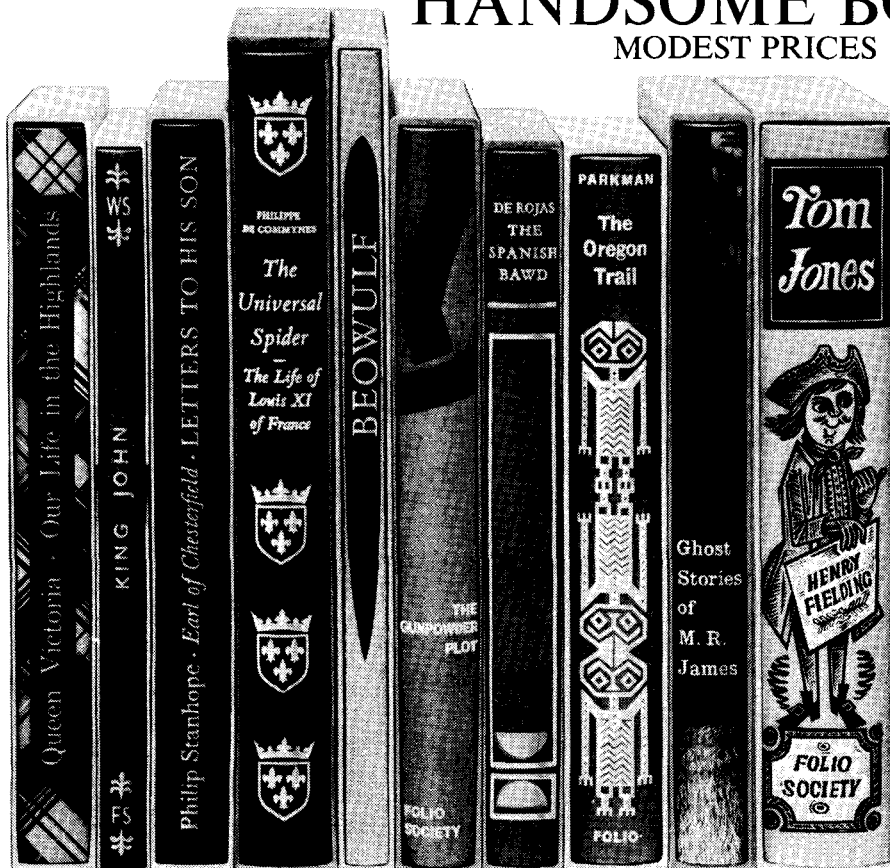
from the site of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre—yet it services your orders as promptly as it could if it was transported to Manhattan. Its name—internationally famous for good book design for over 27 years—is The Folio Society. It doesn't mass produce, it

doesn't buy ephemera from other publishers, it doesn't allow you credit, and it doesn't use a computer. And many potential members are wrongly informed about what it *does*. For instance, it doesn't simply reprint classics. A substantial part of the list is previously

unpublished or newly translated. It doesn't *only* make luxury editions. The average cost of all the books in the current list is a little over \$9 (post free to your door). It *isn't* too English. In choice of book and artist, it is probably the most international book club in the world. And, while it does not lure you to join by fantastic offers, the rewards you get are substantial (like a free copy of *The Bayeux Tapestry*, normally \$8.50). See below...

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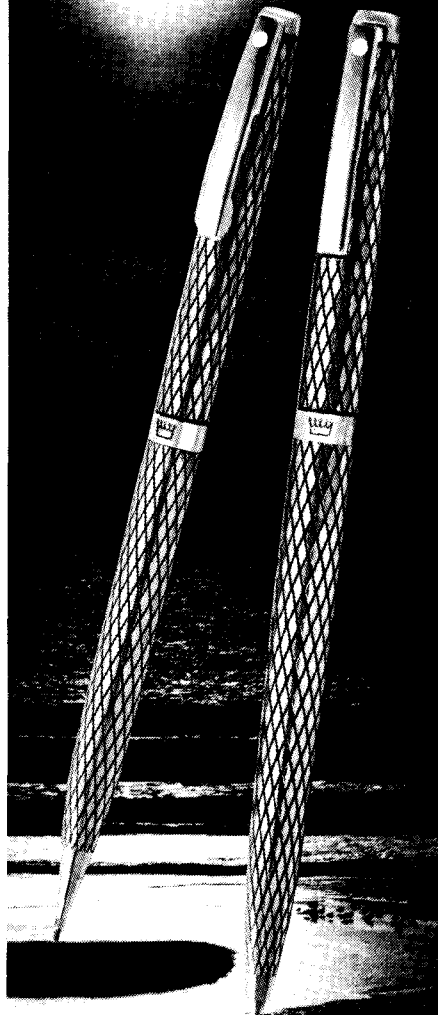
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Since there are no spectacular solutions, the only acceptable ones are the unspectacular kind: projects to improve agricultural yields with small pumps, better seeds, modest irrigation; more efficient marketing and food distribution; a crackdown on smugglers and black marketeers; mass elementary education; a crash program for family planning; better use of meager local resources to save foreign currency; employment for Bangladesh's immense reservoir of idle labor, a third of its working force, by providing food in exchange for work.

These are not quite the dashing propositions Sheikh Mujib had in mind when, with a compassionate world at his feet, he dreamed of an independent Bangladesh throbbing with steel mills, hydroelectric power stations, colossal petrochemical plants. Not only is there no money for that sort of thing nowadays, however, but experience suggests that more humdrum (and less expensive) projects can do a lot more people more good.

What all this comes to is a need for the world's richest nations to figure out not whether but how to keep the world's poorest nations afloat. Nobody who has walked through the sweepers' colony of Chowdatooley, or the Kazi Quader's building in old Dacca, would use the word "whether" instead.

—CLAIRE STERLING

IRAN

During a ride through downtown Tehran in a taxi in the midst of the afternoon rush hour, the driver, exhibiting the customary Iranian disregard for traffic rules of any kind, inched through a crowded intersection against the red light. The presence of a policeman, pedestrians, and cars perpendicular to his path did not seem to bother him. At one point an opening appeared between a 1957 Chevrolet and a Mercedes-Benz, and like Larry Czonka putting his head down and running for daylight, the driver gunned the engine and hurtled into the opening. In the process, however, he sideswiped an elderly lady in a *chador*, the veil that most Iranian

women wear, and barely missed the right leg of the policeman. As the driver moved on, ignoring the outraged cries of the old woman, the policeman reached in through the window and slapped the driver lightly on the cheek. The taxi drove on, then, as if nothing had happened.

Fifteen years ago, this scene could never have taken place. There were no cars in Tehran to speak of, there were no paved roads, and the site of the incident was trackless desert. Now, new cars are appearing on the road at the rate of ten thousand a month. The city is spreading steadily to the north, right up to the Elburz Mountains, which, if you can see them through the smog, reflect a dusky mother-of-pearl light when the sun sets.

What has brought about the sudden change in the face of this city? The answer is oil. Yet, like the responses of the Cumaean sibyl, the answers that oil brings to Iran are ambiguous and bear a mixed blessing. Oil has done many things for this country, but there are many things that oil has not done and that it could do.

The outward signs of oil's blessings are self-evident. Gasoline costs 6 rials a liter, or 35 cents a gallon. Kerosene, a petroleum product little used in the West because of its high refining cost, is used here for heating water and homes alike at a cost of less than 20 cents a gallon. The butane lamps of the merchants in the vegetable bazaar across the street from the Houses of Parliament burn far into the night at a cost of 0.5 cents per hour.

Since nationalization of the foreign oil interests began in 1951, Iran's position in the world of oil has risen sharply. The United States is hardly dependent on Iranian oil, importing only 5 percent of its oil from the Middle East, but other parts of the world are to a very large extent. Almost all of Israel's oil comes from Iran. Countries in Western Europe import from 30 to 50 percent of theirs from Iran. Japan's oil comes mostly from Indonesia, but a substantial amount is imported from Iran. After Saudi Arabia and Iraq, Iran has the largest known oil reserves in the world, and recent reports confirm that a newly discovered natural gas field in



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IRAN

the Persian Gulf is one of the world's largest. Although Iraq boasts more oil deposits than her eastern neighbor, Iran ranks behind only Saudi Arabia among top exporters. Iran's earnings from oil amount to well over a million dollars a day. Yet the impact of the country's immense oil revenues has not been felt below the very highest echelons of Iranian society.

"King of Kings"

In a part of the world long known for its authoritarian monarchies, Iran's ruler, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, officially known as "King of Kings, Light of the Aryans," is one of only six monarchs left today (twenty-five years ago, there were eleven). The Shah is the richest of them, the most powerful, and if need be, at least as ruthless as the others. Authority rests in his hands alone; he makes all the decisions. Since his ascent to the throne thirty-four years ago, these decisions have revolved chiefly around his oil revenues.

The Shah's wealth and absolute power at home have stemmed from an ever-increasing control over Iran's oil exports. His power and extravagant spending increase exponentially with his oil wealth. There are signs that his wealth, power, and hard bargaining will propel him into a position of power on the international scene as well. In midsummer came the dramatic announcement that Iran is buying a 25 percent interest in West Germany's Krupp steelworks, obtaining technological assistance from Krupp as part of the bargain, and joining with Krupp in foreign investment ventures.

The Shah has established a definite set of priorities for the spending of his oil revenues. His first priority has been the military, his second technology; further down the list come education and agriculture.

The Shah is purchasing, on the average, two Phantom jet fighters a week from the United States; he has ordered eighty F-14's (price tags: an estimated \$3 to \$5 million for each Phantom, and \$20 million for an F-14). Last year U.S. arms sales to Iran totaled more than \$4

billion; in 1969 the comparable figure was about \$250 million. According to news reports, American arms sales authorities are working not from an overall policy that takes into account the oil economy that is paying for such weaponry but rather with isolated considerations such as the U.S. balance of payments.

The Shah's air force does not have refueling aircraft, and so the Phantoms are flown over by American pilots and refueled at several points along the way by American air tankers. The U.S. pilots return home on commercial flights.

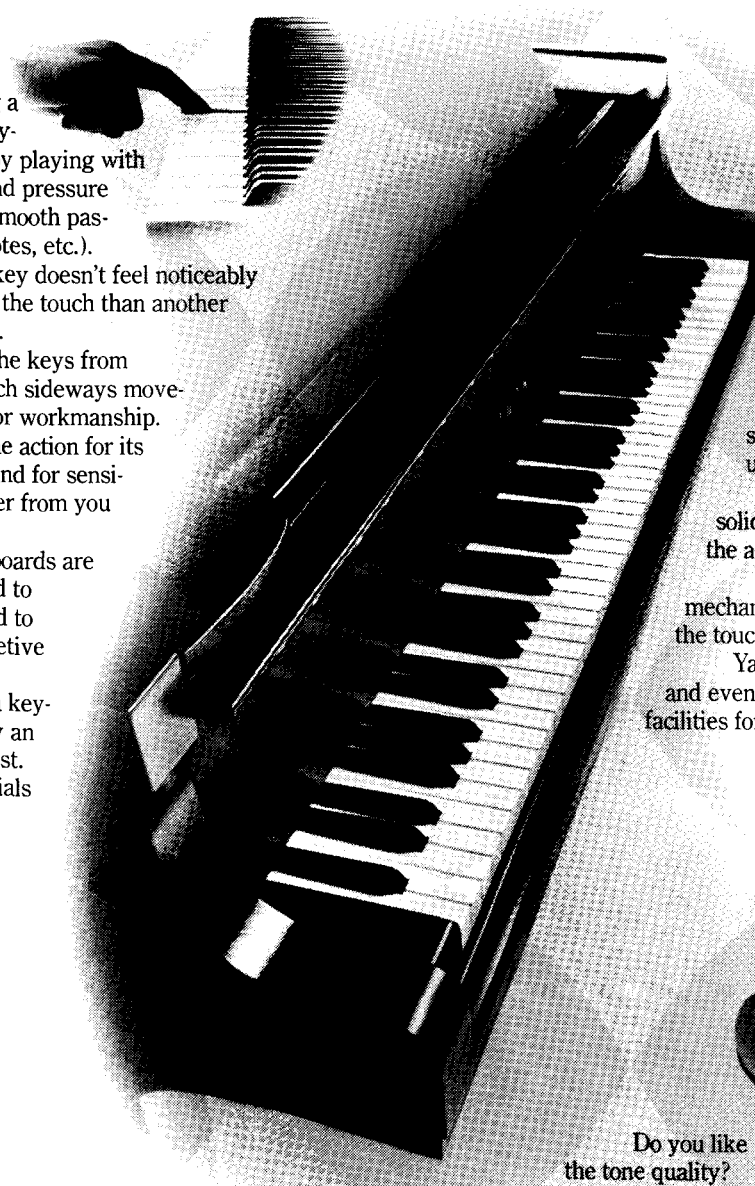
The Iranian government has recently contracted with the Bell Helicopter Company of Texas to build helicopters for its air force. Bell employees are now arriving in droves in both Tehran and Esfahan. The once quiet and fashionable Maharaja Restaurant has been virtually overrun by Bell because of the nightly attraction of a Pakistani Country and Western singer. Nowadays, his rendition of "I'm an Okie from Muskogee" is greeted by Texans and Oklahomans stamping two-tone cowboy boots and waving ten-gallon hats.

Several years ago, the Shah contracted with the British to build Hovercraft for his navy. Iran now boasts the largest Hovercraft fleet in the world, capable of crossing the Persian Gulf at its widest point in twenty-five minutes.

The American military presence in Iran, numbering 5000 in combined services, is there primarily in an advisory capacity to the Iranian armed forces. The size of the American military in Iran has doubled in the last year mostly because the Shah is buying more and more American arms, and needs the American personnel, he says, to train his army in the use of these weapons. The largest and newest Irano-American training center is at Bandar Abbas on the Persian Gulf, where the Shah is building a missile base to guard the Strait of Hormuz, the southern entrance to the Gulf.

The Shah's plans for his country's technological future, second priority after the military, are closely linked to both Iran's oil output and the price of oil on the world market which has risen to four times what it was last year.

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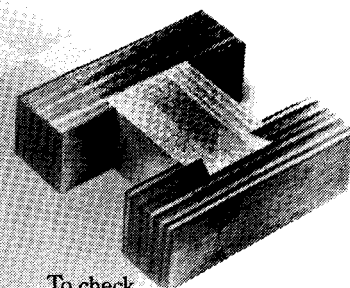
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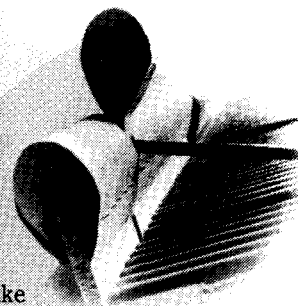
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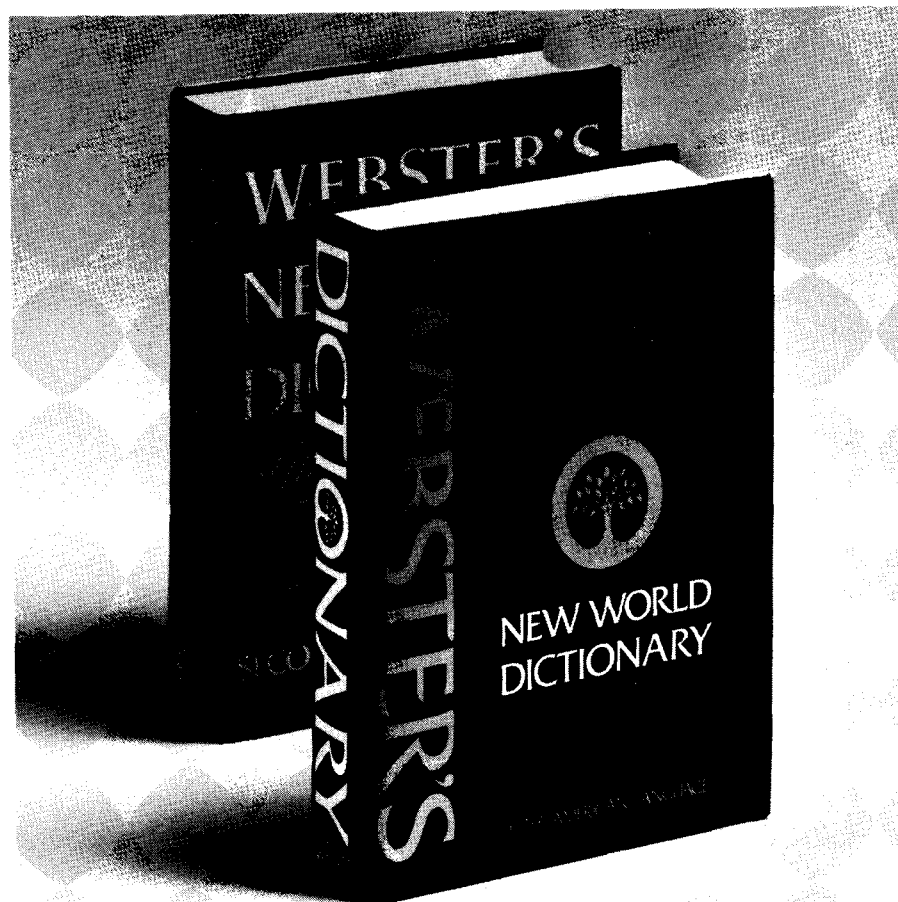
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IRAN

He has been showing himself to be more and more the controlling hand in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). He has consistently fought to keep world oil prices high but not to let them get so high as to create unmanageable trade deficits for his customers. At the June meeting of OPEC in Quito, Ecuador, the Shah's oil minister, Jamshid Amuzegar, blocked a move by Saudi Arabia to lower the price of oil by \$2 on the posted price of \$11.65 per barrel. Yet Amuzegar also blocked a move led by Venezuela, Algeria, Nigeria, Libya, and Kuwait to raise the price by 63 cents on the barrel.

The posting of a high but not exorbitant world price of oil is especially important to the Shah these days. He is pouring more oil dollars into technology than any other ruler in the Middle Eastern oil countries. The success of technology in his country depends not only on the steady accumulation of oil dollars but also on the willingness of foreign governments to make capital investments in Iran, which they would not and could not do if the price of oil were to go up to \$13 or \$15 a barrel.

An example of the Shah's policy of friendly yet coercive cooperation with the West came in late June when he met with French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing for trade talks. "Iran wishes to see a strong and united Europe," the Shah told the Paris newspaper *Le Monde*. "We must assist each other and rely on a greater interdependence between our two areas." Later, after the official talks had ended, the finance ministers of the two countries signed a \$5 billion trade accord. In exchange for an unspecified increase in oil deliveries and \$5 billion, the French were given contracts to build one steel plant, an unspecified amount of military equipment, a subway system for Tehran, and five atomic-power plants of 1000 megawatts each. In a lavish gesture, Iran agreed to pay \$1 billion to the Bank of Paris in advance payment for the French goods. This payment is expected to alleviate greatly the balance-of-payments deficit in France, which was \$1.8 billion for the first

five months of the year. In his oil-related building programs for technology, the Shah resembles a poker player with a large pile of chips and a good run of luck, and while he wants eventually to make more money in the game, he plays his cards wisely and conservatively, making sure he keeps the other players in the game. On the heels of his French and German deals came news of Iran's \$1.2 billion loan to Britain.

While the Shah uses his riches to buy goods outright from the West, he is also aware that his oil dollars may not last forever. At a news conference on January 4 of this year, the Shah announced that after 1985, Iran would export no more crude oil to Japan and the West. After that date, he said, Iran will export only petrochemical products to the countries to which it now sells crude oil.

Making a profit

The Shah has pointed out on several occasions that it is possible to derive over 70,000 non-energy-producing by-products from petroleum. These products range from plastic flowers to nose cones for spaceships. As of this year, the Shah is beginning to sell less of his petroleum, putting more of it into research for his country's nascent petrochemical industry, looking forward to the day when petrochemical products will hold a prominent place on the world market. Although he claims that Iran's oil industry is now in its own hands, the truth of the matter is that the days of energy-producing petroleum are drawing to a close, and the hands that operate that industry are to become a small part of a much larger petrochemical industry. He reasons: Why should Iran not make the profits that the processors of her crude oil now glean?

The Shah is making preparations for an industry which will, in another ten years, offer his country the economic security it still lacks. In order to bring about this change, he is asking for foreign assistance in the field of petrochemicals. Leading the way is the Du Pont Company of Delaware, scheduled to begin building a large petrochemical plant and training center outside Esfahan this fall. The French are also expected

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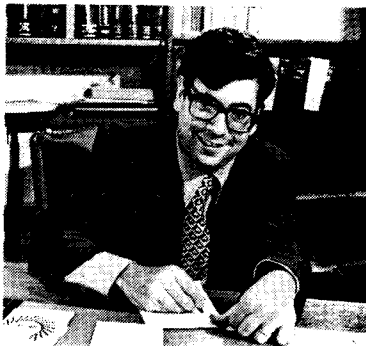
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IRAN

to begin building a plant in the near future.

In a country where energy-producing petroleum is so inexpensive, and the ruler of that country decides to use the energy-producing elements for something else, the question naturally arises, What will the country do for energy? That is where the five French-built nuclear-power plants fit in. There has been some talk of the Shah using these plants to make nuclear armaments. France is the only Western member of the so-called nuclear-weapons club which does not require that the nuclear-power plants it sells be inspected later to safeguard against the radioactive materials being diverted to weapons use. The Shah insists that the power plants will be put to peaceful use in desalinization and electric power.

Murphy's Law

Another technological concern in Iran has been communications. For the last ten years, the international communications consortium has been in the process of constructing, from almost nothing, an efficient communications system. The members of the consortium are General Telephone and Electric of Italy, Nippon Electric of Japan, Page Communications of the United States, and the Seimens Company of West Germany (thus the acronym GNPS). They are building not only telephone and telegraph facilities for Iran but also a modern system of roads.

GNPS has succeeded in building an excellent system of roads. Their road-building venture is the most significant development in Iranian transit since the construction of the Trans-Iranian Railway in the 1920s. Good asphalt roads now link Tehran with most of the provincial capitals—Tabriz, Esfahan, Kerman-shah, and Meshed. (The superior nature of these roads is strongly impressed on a traveler to neighboring countries. The road from the Irano-Turkish border to Erzurum, 300 kilometers away in eastern-central Turkey, looks and rides as though it had been under a steady mortar barrage for the last five years.)

Although the consortium has done its best to improve the sorry state of telephone and telegraph facilities in Iran, they are not nearly up to par with those in Western countries. The combination of American telephones, Italian wires, and Japanese terminals has produced a dramatic illustration of Murphy's Law: If anything can possibly go wrong, it will. On some days, placing a telephone call can become an afternoon's activity, as wrong numbers and other mishaps often outnumber successful connection 5 to 1. Getting a telephone installed in the first place is another problem; it often requires up to a year for the telephone company to install an instrument in a new house.

Without oil, of course, none of the Shah's plans for Iran's technological future could ever have been made. The military and the various technological building programs have enjoyed almost all the Shah's attention and oil revenues since nationalization began twenty-three years ago. These are the things that impress the Western eye—the army, the oil, the technology, for they are all visible. Less evident are those sectors of Iranian society not favored by the Midas touch of oil.

Until recently, the Shah had devoted little attention to the field of education. Last February, in a decree to the Parliament, he guaranteed free public education and one free hot meal a day to every Iranian child through the eighth grade. Most well-to-do Iranian families in Tehran send their children to the two international schools in the city, where English is the working language. The inadequacy of education is especially critical at the higher levels. There are only three major universities in the country, so most families who can afford to send their children to the privately run international schools do so in the hope that they can go on to universities in the United States, Europe, or Israel.

The Shah, who received his education in Switzerland, is ambivalent toward this practice. He wants, on the one hand, to build up the universities in his country; but on the other hand, he realizes that the training his subjects receive abroad

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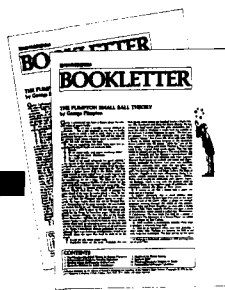
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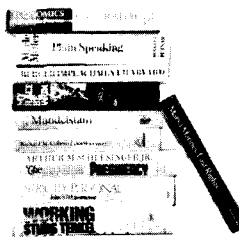
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IRAN

is at the moment far superior to the training they receive at home. Added to this dilemma is the fact that many Iranian students in the United States and Europe have elected to stay on in their adopted countries instead of returning to Iran with their newfound knowledge and expertise. To inhibit that brain drain, the government now requires students to post a bond of \$10,000, guaranteeing their return to Iran. Without the bond, no exit visa is granted.

Other sectors of Iranian society have also failed to receive much of the Shah's attention. Life in the *ostans*, or provinces, has changed little in the last five hundred years. Despite the Shah's take-over of large tracts of land from the so-called "1000 families," the old land-owning aristocracy of the last century, very little agricultural reform has been achieved. The Shah has made much publicized but ineffective attempts at land reclamation and irrigation in the *ostans*. Much of the Iranian plateau, once the most fertile grain-producing land in the area between the Tigris and the Indus, has remained a wasteland since the Arab conquest of Persia in the seventh century. Domestic production of grain does not meet the demands of the Iranian consumers, and the Shah has resorted to imports. The price of bread has gone up 2 rials (3 cents) a loaf in the last year. The price of rice has risen 5 rials (8 cents) a kilo. Sugar disappears from the market about once every three months. Pasturelands are so sparse that for a period of three months in the late winter and spring of this year, there was literally no meat in Tehran. In early May, the news that 10,000 live sheep had just arrived by boat from New Zealand was heralded in the press with a full-page photo-essay. The price of beef and lamb has risen 100 percent in the last 18 months. Chicken, which became the meat staple after the disappearance of beef and lamb, also soon ran out, and frozen ones were flown in from Germany. After a brief period of abundance in the fall and winter, eggs and milk were not to be had in the spring.

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population lives in villages and earns less than \$50 a month, this inflation is having a profound effect. Prices are beginning to rise beyond the range of most consumers. The price of beef and lamb is currently \$1.20 a pound. Rice costs 30 cents a pound, eggs cost 75 cents a dozen, and the long snow-shoe-shaped barbari bread costs 20 cents a loaf. Milk costs 35 cents a quart.

The staple of most Iranians is a combination of rice, lamb, beans, raisins, and miscellany called *pou-loh*. Added to this is *ab-gusht*, literally translated "water-meat," a kind of stew containing scraps of lamb, chick-peas, rice, and a broth. Other staples include various dairy products, such as milk, yogurt, and cheese. As the prices of all these items go up, it is becoming increasingly difficult for consumers in villages and cities to meet the ever-rising cost of living.

Yes and no

The Shah's large-scale spending on armaments is an integral part of his foreign policy. The memory of August, 1941, when the Russians overran his country in two days, is still fresh in his mind, it seems. While the Russians have sold great amounts of military matériel to the Shah in recent years, the monarch's attitude toward his northern neighbor is cautious and cool. His foreign policy vis-à-vis Russia, the United States, and all the countries in the Middle East brings to mind a nubile, coy young woman courting the elderly gentlemen in the neighborhood. The young woman extends her hand to all, says "yes" to no one, but neither does she say "no." Even his friendship with the United States, while marked by a great deal of military purchasing and technological assistance, is balanced by his cautious entente with the Soviet Union.

Of the five countries which border on Iran, the Shah is on good terms with all but Iraq. The past six months have been marked by border skirmishes between Iran and her western neighbor, whose Ba'athist (Arab Socialist) government has many bones to pick with the Shah. One issue is the Arab minority in Khuzistan, the Iranian province which borders on Iraq in the south.

The Ba'athists claim that these Arabs should, by ethnic right, be part of Iraq. Two years ago, the government executed an Amin-style extradition and forced all Iranian nationals living in Iraq to leave. The Shah responded by urging the Iranians to think seriously about their religious heritage and take back the Shi'ah Moslem shrine at Karbala, just west of the Euphrates. The real reason for the Shah's possessiveness toward Khuzistan is the Shatt-al-Arab, the mouth of the Tigris-Euphrates confluence. The Iranians claim that the border between the two countries lies in the middle of the river, and the Iraqis claim that it is on the eastern bank. Were the latter the case, then several known oil deposits and an existing oil refinery would be in Iraq.

Even though the Shah has made no overt move against the Ba'athists, for fear of Baghdad's allies, the Soviets, he has taken steps to weaken the control of the Ba'athist regime over Iraq. The Kurds, a collection of non-Arab tribes which make up 25 percent of the population of Iraq, are fighting for their independence in the mountainous northern provinces centered on Kirkuk. The Shah has been supplying the Kurdish army (called "Pesh Merga," meaning "facing death") with American-built artillery and Czech-designed, Iranian-manufactured Brno rifles.

The Shah's relations with the other Arab states are cordial. Iran is the only country in the Middle East which successfully resisted the imposition of Arab culture and language after the Arab conquests of the seventh century. Iranians, for the most part, are Moslems, but they speak Persian; and although Moslem, they are members of the Shi'ah sect, a minority sect which has its origins in a civil war fought in 680 A.D. over the succession to the caliphate. The cultural heritage of Iran goes back to two thousand years before the Moslem conquest. Iran has never felt itself at one with the Arabs, and its attitude toward the Arabs has always been mixed.

The October War was marked in the Iranian press with vigorous denunciations of the Israelis and loud vocal support for Iran's "Moslem brothers," the Arabs. Yet the Shah

supplied Israel with American Phantom jets during the war; he is the only Moslem leader who sells oil to Israel; his doctors and scientists go to Israel for their education. The Shah's policy toward the Arab-Israeli controversy is very much like the cautious courtship which he employs with the United States and the Soviet Union. The Shah offends no one side for fear of retribution from the other's allies. He cannot risk a full endorsement of the Arabs, for it would jeopardize his American aid. He cannot risk an open endorsement of the Israelis for several reasons. The most important reason is extremely close to home.

The Shah's most immediate foreign policy concern, more important than the Arabs and the Israelis, is the Persian Gulf. This is where the oil lies. It is the body of water he shares with Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrein, Abu Dhabi, Oman, and the other oil-rich sheikdoms pour their oil through this narrow body of water. Whoever controls the Gulf controls one half of the world's oil. The Shah has announced himself to be the protector of the Persian Gulf and aims, he says, to keep it out of the hands of the Communists and Communist-allied forces. The Shah has said that if Iraq makes any move against her neighbor Kuwait, he will send his armed forces to drive the Iraqis out. At present, an Iranian expeditionary force is fighting against Communist insurgents in Oman. In 1972 he sent a similar force to help the government of Bahrein. In another two years, the American-built missile base will be operative at the Strait of Hormuz.

Were the Shah to throw his lot openly with the Israelis, the extremely conservative Moslem sheikhs on the Gulf, whose friendship he is trying so hard to cultivate, might look elsewhere for leadership. If he were to take Israel's side in the controversy, there is also the possibility that he might alienate the Soviets.

The Shah is thus the one Middle Eastern ruler content to stay in the middle. He plays that position to no one else's greater advantage than his own, enjoying aid from the two major arms suppliers in the area, peace with all or most of his neighbors, and increasing hegemony in the Persian Gulf.



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IRAN

The Shah's international successes have not come without a strong measure of absolutism at home. The background for much of his success has been a rigorous control of his military, his government, his national press, and his people themselves.

Although the Shah's position as ruler of Iran appears secure now, it has not always been. He ascended the throne in 1941, at the age of twenty-one, the king of a country occupied by Britain and Russia. During the war, the Tudeh, or Communist Party, gained a great deal of support in the provinces owing to the general power vacuum and confusion in Tehran. At war's end, the Tudeh set up an autonomous, Soviet-supported state in the northern province of Azerbaijan. The Shah's outright struggle against the Communists began in 1947, when he succeeded in wresting Azerbaijan back into the country. Azerbaijan Day is celebrated every year with a military parade—a reminder of the past, and implied present, threat of Communism. The struggle continued for another six years until all the Tudeh leaders were either in exile or executed.

The Shah has also encountered serious threats from the right, most notably the premiership of Dr. Mohammad Mossadeq in the early 1950s, when the Shah was forced to leave the country, only to be restored with much help from the CIA. Nevertheless, it is a wariness of the domestic left that has motivated many of the Shah's authoritarian measures. Last fall, when twelve journalists were tried for conspiring to assassinate the Shah, one of the principal arguments of the prosecution was that they were Communists. Four of them were condemned to death; the other eight were given prison terms.

Any move against the Shah from the left is immediately crushed. Last year at the National University in Tehran, students demonstrated against his arms-buying program. The police were brought in, the demonstration turned into a riot, and four students were killed. Nothing about it ever appeared in the press.

All news in the Iranian press is favorable to the Shah. All daily papers, whether in the native Persian, English, or French, must lead with a story about the Shah or the royal family above the fold on the front page at least every other day. This front-page policy is firm, and no exceptions may be taken to the rule. In their final editions on the day of the outbreak of the October War, all five major dailies happened to open with stories not related to the royal family. After war broke out later that day, the newspapers had to lead their next day's editions with a story about Crown Prince Reza opening a track meet. News of the outbreak of war appeared, by necessity, below the fold on the front page.

Shadows

No two army officers above the rank of major are allowed to meet without the permission of the Shah. If a secret meeting is held and later discovered, the officers are either relieved of their commands and sent into retirement in the provinces, or they are hanged. Twenty-five of the seventy-five people executed in 1973 were army officers convicted of conspiracy. The Shah employs a shadow man for every minister in his Cabinet. It is the responsibility of the shadow to keep the Shah informed at all times of the activities of the minister.

After Israel, Iran has the most efficient secret police in the Middle East. In fact, the Shah's secret police, SAVAK, are Israeli-trained. The SAVAK agent's job is to inform his superiors of any talk or embryonic movement against the Shah. SAVAK has agents in every oil refinery, factory, business firm, university, and school in the country. It also retains informers among the communities of Iranian students abroad. Any threats to the Shah's security, substantive or rhetorical, are quickly dealt with by SAVAK, sometimes by interrogation, a knock on the door in the middle of the night, and summary imprisonment. The right of habeas corpus does not exist in Iran.

The two international schools in Tehran, with primarily Iranian student bodies, employ mostly American and British faculties. At the be-

ginning of the school year, the teachers are told to assume that there is at least one SAVAK informer in every class they teach. They are advised to beware of anything they say about the Shah, and that if any mention of the Shah comes up in class, the best thing to do is change the subject.

A short time ago, a history teacher in one of these schools was discussing serfdom in the Middle Ages in Europe. The day happened to be the eleventh anniversary of the Shah's abolition of serfdom. The teacher was not aware of this, and in order to illustrate the problem to his students, he observed that there was still serfdom in certain parts of Iran.

An Iranian student in the front row raised his hand and asked for permission to speak.

"Sir," he said, "we like you, but don't say things like that or we'll have to tell somebody. You can get in trouble with the police for saying things like that, especially today."

The teacher changed the subject.

The Shah of Iran, with his oil revenues, his delicately balanced foreign policy, his armed forces, his nascent technology, and his absolute control of his own country, has risen to a position of prominence in the world today. Yet one wonders whether he has really brought his country with him to that position. One recalls the inscription on the tomb of the Emperor Darius, the great ruler of the Achaemenid dynasty 2500 years ago:

I have chosen the way which was
straight as a javelin;
I have chosen the right way.
To no knight, to no manservant
Have I ever done violence.
The vassal who built up my house
Have I raised up as a support of
my house;
But the vassal who brought down
my house,
Him have I punished according to
the right and the law.

REPORTS & COMMENT CONTRIBUTORS

Claire Sterling, author of "The Making of the Sub-Saharan Wasteland" (*The Atlantic*, May, 1974), recently traveled to Bangladesh.

On occasion, as in this issue, some Reports will be unsigned at the request of their authors. *The Atlantic*, of course, assumes responsibility for them.



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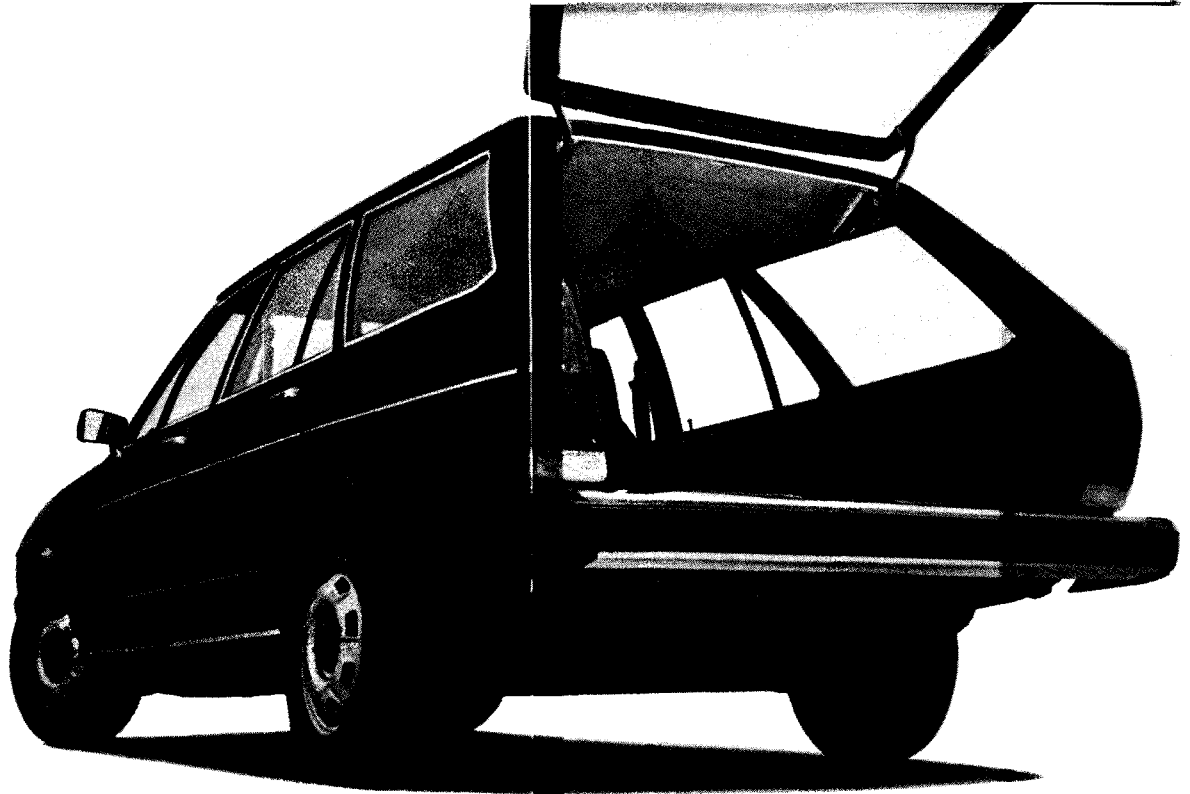
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Summersend

by L. E. Sissman

Among English railwaymen, "Summersend" used to be an imaginary, but usefully generic, place-name; at the other end of its primitive single track, "Summersend" connected with an equally hypothetical village called "Winterstoke." To avoid collisions, trains were only allowed to proceed in either direction when the engine-driver was in personal possession of a large staff like a shepherd's crook (of which there was only one, of course), bearing a substantial tag marked, naturally, "Summersend to Winterstoke."

In spite of this provenance, though, I'm sometimes inclined, when this time of year arrives again, to think that "Summersend" is a real place, or at any rate, a real state of mind. There is no place in the Julian Calendar quite like our own late August, with its electrically charged deadweight of muggy heat and heavy cloud, implying its own end in heavy, thunderous rain, quick clearing, and a cool and crystal dawn of palest peacock blue.

But it is under the steaming fog of August mornings—soon burning off to a universal heat haze with the mean, piggy red eye of the sun shining implacably through—that we suffer and triumph more, perhaps, than at any other time of year. January is wicked and wither-wringing, but warm clothes, warm cars, and warm houses force it to keep its pretty distance: there is a picture postcard in every window even when the biggest blizzard of the season does its worst outside. At the end of summer, there is less escape: we feel burdened by the weight of heat and moisture, and we sag as

the trees do (as they do almost palpably in the "Summer" movement of Vivaldi's *Seasons*). If you suffer from the heat, like me, you rise in the mist of morning to the certain knowledge of another scorcher just ahead, and you wait fearfully for the first drops of sweat to break out on your brow. If this happens on the way to work, you know it will be a fierce one, and you slump in your air-conditioned office for half an hour before getting seriously to work, letting the chilled and filtered fake-fall air soothe you back into a semblance of crisp and able humanity.

Twenty years ago, I had the extreme displeasure of working for two summers in an office devoid of air-conditioning. Moreover, it was located on the second floor over a filthy, garbage-reeking alley; to make the world more manifest, my desk was just above the exhaust fan of a cheap restaurant that specialized in fried foods. On the sidewalk below the fan was a large and ineradicable pool of smelly dark-brown grease. Fortunately, my employer was an easygoing fellow who, though he would not allow us the luxury of an air-conditioner—he alone had one—looked the other way when we spent two or three hours for lunch in any of a number of low bars, all with boreal iced air, in the near neighborhood.

It's eleven thirty. I glance out my office window at the square outside. All hard edges are dissolved in heat. The big granite public building opposite seems to be bathed in a pinkish, prismatic light that softens its bulky outline. The sixty-story building one block over never reaches its apex; its steep sides tumble home more steeply than at other seasons, and it tapers to a vanishing point somewhere around the forty-seventh floor. The walkers on the street plod laboriously, as if through Gobi sands. I ask myself if it is really worth going out to lunch. At this point, one of three things happens: either I have brought a sandwich in a brown bag, in which case I stay inside and eat with the other brown-baggers at a conference-room table; or I whisk mouse-like round the corner to a sandwich shop and bring back an unsatisfactory replica of the corned-beef sandwiches of yesteryear (a yester-

year like, say, 1972) for a thoroughly modern price (like, say, \$2.00); or I make a date and step out with a friend to while away a longer lunch hour at some more distant eating place.

For a heat-sufferer, this walk to lunch is an odyssey, or at least an anabasis. Each sticky step in molten tar under the uncompromising sun is a step down into the inferno; I wait again for sweat to start, for the wall of humid, superheated air to overwhelm my personal thermostat. After three blocks on a ninety-five-degree day, I know I'll begin to fume, wilt, and go delicately purple; and cabs are no help in my town, since none of them are air-conditioned.

At last the restaurant, a cool cave of dim white napery and faintly throbbing refrigeration plants, which almost makes it all worth while. The friendly waiter—and why not, since he's been taking his ease in this cool air all morning?—hurries back with our drinks, and we lose our tetchy irritability in the glacial, chinking depths of a martini, or, more temperately, a frosted goblet of Johannisberger Riesling. Now the real work of the day often begins, assuming my companion is also a colleague. Away from the urgencies of the office, we erect and study long-range schemes, some plausible, some not. Great summer trees of consequences ramify, and maybe for the first time all week or all month, we understand the implications of the day-to-day chores we've been grinding out, willy-nilly, against our deadlines. Finally, as the second drink seeps in and exalts us slightly and alas, temporarily, we move to some astral plane where our chatter seems inspired and our comfort seems only a meet reward for having braved the tortures of the August morning. Then we order lunch—with, perhaps, more wine—and the two deep-green salads come, earnest of summer, the only native produce of the year. We can taste the earth—though not the dirt, since this restaurant purges its vegetables efficiently of sand—in every crackling lettuce leaf, and the real olive oil and wine vinegar suggest some sort of Italian holiday,

L. E. Sissman is a contributing editor of *The Atlantic*.

BYSTANDER

perhaps on a terrace on Anacapri, with Vesuvius poking an ignorably monitory finger of smoke into the azure sky.

Back to work. The return march, gravid with drinks and lunch in the height of the torpor. I swim like a turtle through the brackish water of the glaring afternoon. Again, the rest cure—over a bitter, black iced coffee—at the office. Half an hour later, I am restored and typing some not-too-trying little copy job. By four, the second wind arrives, and I tackle some more demanding project. A little after five, I flick off the IBM electric and compose myself for the third encounter with the heat.

As I walk out of the building on my way to the bus, great cumulonimbi have at last moved up to overawe the sun; I walk slowly in a black shade no less sticky and humid than the preceding sunshine. The bus is crowded, packed with sweating people and their raveling bundles homeward bound. I get a too-small seat and hope the air-conditioning will function when the engine is started. At five thirty, the driver kicks the starter; the tepid coolness begins to trickle out of the window vents, no match for the Quonset-hut-like heat that has built up inside the alloy shell. I am doomed to sweat miserably throughout the forty-minute ride to where my car is parked.

Through hissing, lowing traffic, the big bus makes its way to the outer suburbs. Right on time, partly because the traffic, without winter's tens of thousands of student cars, moves more quickly in the summer. At Howard Johnson's, where the bus stops, I retrieve my car from under a tree that does not shade it very well. Having forgone air-conditioning for assorted reasons, including the ridiculous expense of cooling a Porsche, I strip off my tie and jacket, open the sunroof and the rear quarter windows, and take off in a blast of moving, if not cooling, air. Five miles down the road, the blast has equalized my temperature, and with drying forehead, I am free to survey Vivaldi's drooping trees. The country is locked in summer. The dog days rage and bite.

Relief is seasons, even years, away.

At home, my wife, who does not sanction air-conditioning, though she indulges me, ushers me into my air-conditioned workroom and supplies me with a sizable iced coffee. I sip and read *Newsweek*. Soon dinner is ready, and we sit down to another salad: this time, unconscionably costly crabmeat, but what the hell, it's August. Melon for desert. And more iced coffee. This being Thursday night—I don't work Fridays so that I can attend to my own writing at home—I leisurely perambulate the browning lawns and flowerless gardens and settle down, after "Washington Week in Review," to read a book for possible review or just for pleasure. Tonight it is a rereading of *A Coffin for Dimitrios*. The air-conditioner drones; I glance occasionally out the window at the building thunderheads and the yellow cracks of heat lightning between the hills on the horizon and the occluded sky; I return to my iced coffee and the exigencies of Ambler's evil men, as typical of the thirties as Auden's scouts and spies among the pylons of the new forbidden country.

The storm breaks. Against the total dark of nine o'clock, chain lightning and all its variegated brethren; a gusty roll-cloud wind; then steady rain, pouring and beating as if to penetrate our house (which it sometimes does, to the disgust of our insurance agent). More reading as the storm slackens sail and regresses to a solid drum of rain; then news, mostly trivial and local; then to bed. I sleep, at the end of the week, with unusual panache. Dreams, which often surface memorably on other nights, remain submerged. I lie unclaimed by wakefulness until, at four o'clock, my over-forty-year-old bladder sounds the charge, and I totter to the toilet.

Morning. I awaken at eight, a late hour for me, and look out the window at the mountains (mountains here, foothills in other, more precipitous parts). Surprisingly, they are there, some thirty miles away, against a backdrop of blue, chilled, cloudless sky. The storm has passed; August has, only temporarily, passed; the dog days have been replaced by the first morning like real fall.

I shiver, characteristically—un-

happy at change, for all my glee at summer's end—at the first chill. The temperature must surely be—what? fifty-five? I place my bets. I'll say, experienced countryman, fifty-one. I go downstairs and look at the thermometer outside the dining-room window, already beaded with condensation, a forerunner of frost: fifty-two. Close enough: I have again accredited myself as a supreme weather prophet. I walk out, conscious of my flapping bathrobe over my summer shortie pajamas, to get the paper. When I return, the coffee's on the boil. I am delighted with the prospect of a hot drink: how fast the summer flies. I look out the window at the woodpile. Two cords ready for the burning, and this would not be an unthinkable warm day to start.

I retire to my workroom (or study or library—what is a sufficiently unpompous term?) to write a poem. The cool airs spur the juices. I find myself writing a fall poem, complete with all the requisite stigmata, including the felled leaves and the first killing frost. I finish it and walk outside, lost in a comically tolerant philosophic mood. I address the ash leaves, the marigolds, and the bud-ded asters, asking them, without actually speaking (I'm not that far gone yet), whether they're ready to meet their maker, whether extreme unction is their wish. They don't respond. Neither do the worm-worrying robins, dotting the lawn, or the thrush that still sings in the woods. No matter; I have done my bit. I am at one with the changing world.

Friday morning metamorphoses into Friday night. There is a faint aurora, the autumn's first. Lavish draperies bar the vexed way to the north, impeded by high clouds. What's this? Another low?

Of course. Morning dawns foggy and dripping. Saturday is summer's end resumed: the weeping trees, the coruscating air, the hills locked in a vaporous sunrise, the temperature and humidity both streaking toward the hundred mark. Cicadas tune their resined strings for many more bars of their arched song—a song that returns to chained earth after its highest flights.

Summersend is not yet. But now I welcome summer's continuance—heat, sweat, and all—in view of the alternative.

IBM Reports

Four principles of privacy

For some time now, there has been a growing effort in this country to preserve the individual's right to privacy in the face of expanding requirements for information by business, government and other organizations.

In searching for appropriate guidelines, private and governmental groups have explored many avenues and considered many aspects of the privacy question.

As a company with a vital interest in information and information handling, IBM endorses in their basic purpose four principles of privacy which have emerged from various studies, and which appear to be the cornerstones of sound public policy on this sensitive issue.

1. Individuals should have access to information about themselves in record-keeping systems. And there should be some procedure for individuals to find out how this information is being used.
2. There should be some way for an individual to correct or amend an inaccurate record.
3. An individual should be able to prevent information from being improperly disclosed or used for other than authorized purposes without his or her consent, unless required by law.
4. The custodian of data files containing sensitive information should take reasonable precautions to be sure that the data are reliable and not misused.

Translating such broad principles into specific and uniform guidelines will, of course, not be easy. They must be thoughtfully interpreted in terms of the widely varying purposes of information systems generally.

In particular, the proper balance must be found between limiting access to information for the protection of privacy on one hand, and allowing freedom of information to fulfill the needs of society on the other.

But solutions must be found. And they will call for the patient understanding and best efforts of everyone concerned. In this search, IBM pledges its full and whole-hearted cooperation.

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THE MAIL

HARLAN COUNTY

SIR: Re: "Burning Up People to Make Electricity" in the July issue.

In reading this commendable and informative article by ex-Senator Fred Harris, I was dismayed by two misstatements of geography. I realize these errors are insignificant as to the real value of the article, but as one interested in accuracy of geographical statements, I am concerned.

The article is correct in the broad statement that as used in the United States, "Piedmont" refers to a region between the Appalachian Mountains and the Atlantic Ocean. Why the article then permits the inclusion of Harlan County, Kentucky, in the Piedmont is beyond understanding, because the Ridge and Valley section of the Appalachians lies to the east. The geology of Harlan County is unlike that of the Piedmont. Even the statement, "between the Appalachian Mountains and the Atlantic Ocean" is not wholly adequate because of the omission of any reference to the Coastal Plain.

Second, someone is badly in error in placing the setting of the novel *The Shepherd of the Hills* in this area instead of in the Ozarks of southern Missouri, in the vicinity of the White River. Presumably, the *Trail of the Lonesome Pine* is the proper reference, as its setting is in this area of southwestern Virginia and southeastern Kentucky.

J. KENNETH ABLEITER
Hyattsville, Md.

Mr. Harris replies:

John Fox, Jr., did indeed write *The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come*, not *Shepherd of the Hills*, which was written by Harold Bell Wright. The historical marker in

Harlan County has it correctly. So do my notes. It's my typewriter that can't be trusted.

ADVICE AND CONSENT

SIR: The interesting discussion on the Vice President in your July issue ("On the Threshold of the White House") brought memories of my best-remembered public school teacher, who taught us—and he emphasized that if we failed to mention any of the three in a test our answer would be wrong—that the duties of the Vice President were to preside over the Senate, to go fishing, and to wait for the President to die!

With many, many reminders by the present Administration on the importance of maintaining complete separation of the three branches of our government, I have been confused by its inconsistency in not offering a constitutional amendment to rid the Vice President of presiding over the Senate.

Two points which I hoped some of your contributors would dwell on in their interesting comments were exactly what proportion of the costs, salaries, traveling of the Vice President—himself and his co-workers, including Secret Service staff—is paid for by taxpayers and what proportion by political parties when Vice Presidents (as Nixon in 1960, Humphrey in 1968, and Ford now) go out to make contacts, said contacts easily bringing to them (at least in cases of Mr. Nixon and Mr. Humphrey) their party's presidential nomination.

Second, there was no mention of the work accomplished by two of our country's unelected Vice Presidents—the late Mrs. Wilson, who unquestionably was in charge of our government's executive branch for

at least six months; and Mr. James Haggerty, who was instructed by President Eisenhower that he (and not Vice President Nixon) should "take over" when Mr. Eisenhower realized how long he would be incapacitated.

But of all the Vice Presidents I remember (and I go back to "Good Five Cent Cigar" Marshall), my favorite is Charles G. Dawes because he had the intestinal fortitude to make an unprecedented speech after his inauguration in 1925, chastising the senators for failing to change their antiquated rules (which they still haven't changed). Said rules, Mr. Dawes pointed out, allowed one senator to tie up the procedures of this very costly (to the taxpayers) body of lawmakers with a speech that need not be limited in time and need not be directed to the matter under consideration. Mr. Dawes, in speaking out against filibusters, was pleading for the Senate to allow majority to rule in this great democracy of ours.

LUTHER KOHR
Clearwater, Fla.

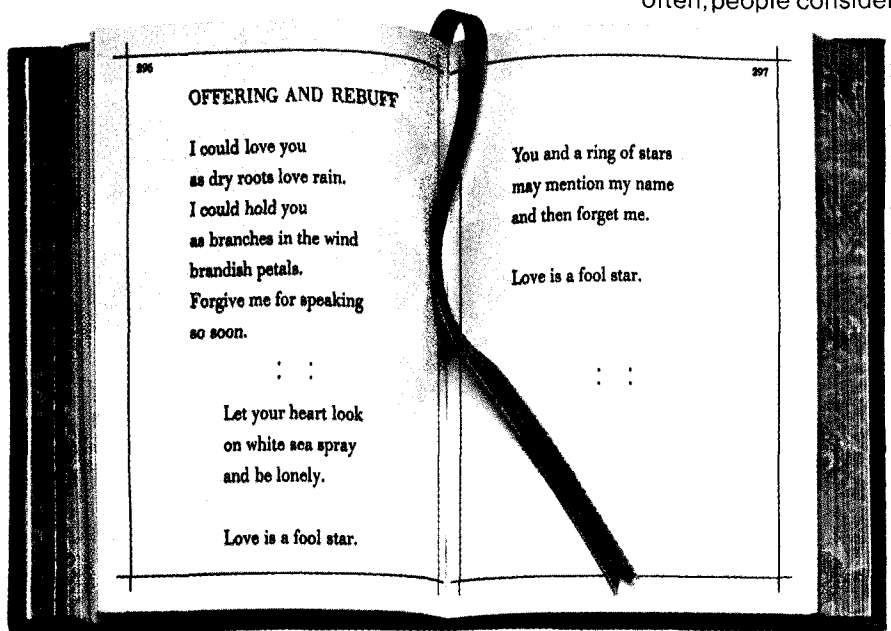
SIR: John Kenneth Galbraith's review of Justin Kaplan's *Lincoln Steffens* ("Raking It," June *Atlantic*) tells us more about the reviewer than it does about the book itself. The review is striking evidence that some of the liberals who came to political maturity during the years of the New Deal and the Cold War still cannot come to terms with Steffens' radicalism. Steffens' work as a muckraker is deprecated because his view of the relationship of business to politics cannot be fitted neatly within a liberal analysis of corruption.

Galbraith turns to consideration of *The Shame of the Cities*, and although he informs us that he is

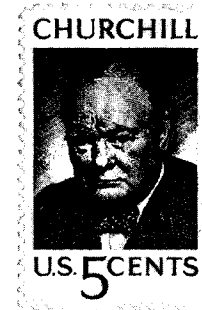
The real

People become obsolete before their time in our assembly line culture.

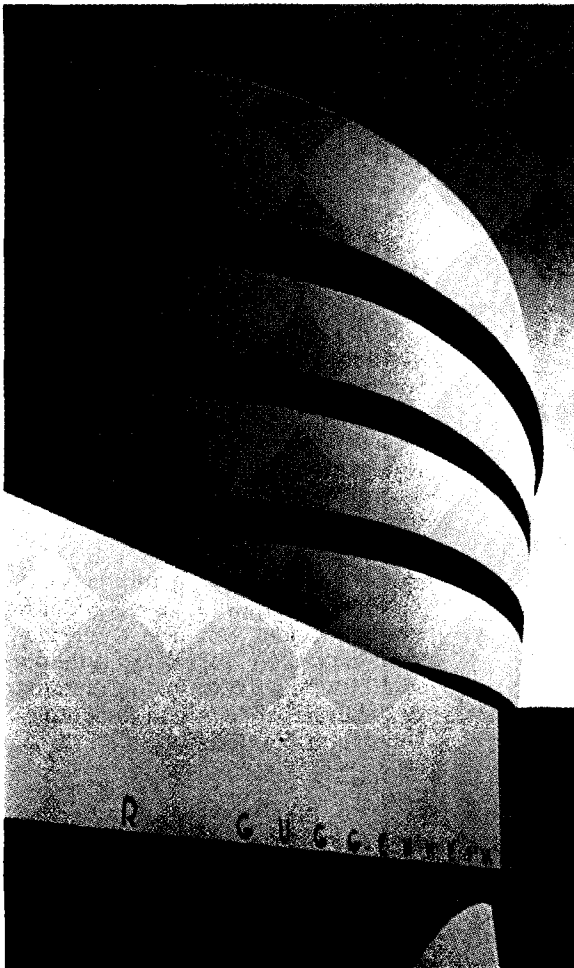
We no longer grow old gracefully. Years of experience are not always valued. Instead of using the wisdom of age to help solve our problems, we have turned the aged themselves into a problem. Our preoccupation with youth has made us forget that, often, people considered "too old" have the youngest ideas of all.



Carl Sandburg, age 85, "Offering and Rebuff."



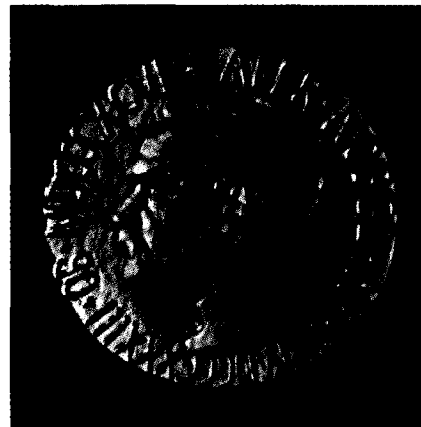
Winston Churchill, age 77, re-elected British Prime Minister.



Frank Lloyd Wright, age 76, "Guggenheim Museum."



Grandma Moses, age 101, "The Rainbow."



Dr. Albert Schweitzer, age 68, "Nobel Peace Prize"

The ideal

The maturity and social flexibility to recognize that for some, life reserves its greatest rewards until later.

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Your next can of beer may have been a Coors can that was a Falstaff can that was a Carling can.

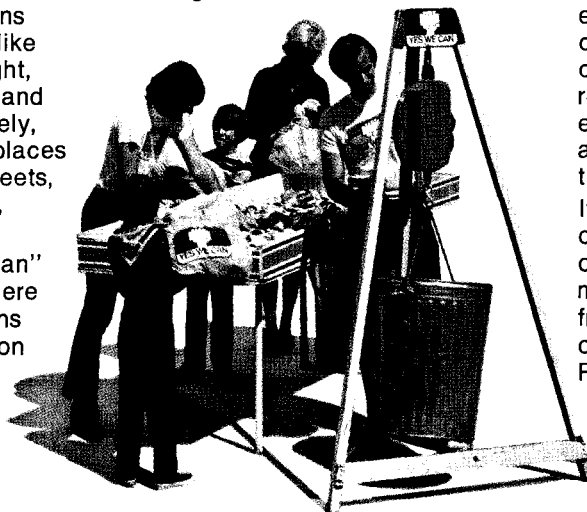
The aluminum beer cans chilling in your cooler may have led other lives. Possibly as soft drink cans. Possibly as iced tea cans. Possibly as other beer cans. All because of aluminum's recyclability.

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The reasons for using aluminum are found in aluminum itself.

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"discriminating in every respect," he has missed the main point of the articles Steffens collected in this book. To Galbraith the book's "unifying thread seemed sufficiently obvious," but Steffens wrote for an audience that most often believed that the remedy for corruption was to substitute "good" leaders for "bad" politicians, replacing the bosses with advocates of business-oriented "good government." Up to a point, Steffens was also a conventional reformer, telling his readers that "no one class is at fault, nor any one breed, nor any particular interest or group of interests." But Steffens also declared that the businessman "is the chief source of corruption, and it were a boon if he would neglect politics." It was, above all, the commercial spirit that undermined democratic institutions. In offering this analysis Steffens brought a new sophistication and a new clarity of thought to the muckraking movement. Steffens insisted that Americans must go beyond a simply moralistic view of social problems and must analyze the institutional arrangements of society.

Galbraith apparently does not find much that is worthwhile in all of this, but then, too, he is not particularly interested in any search for fundamental causes underlying our recent experiences with corruption typified by Watergate. He sums up his own reaction to Watergate with the finding that the fault "lies deeply within Richard Nixon." Of course Nixon bears personal responsibility for Watergate; as an individual, wielding great power, he has grossly abused that power and there is very substantial evidence that he has directly broken the law. But are we not to look beyond the personal characteristics and involvement of Richard Nixon? Galbraith may look down his nose at those who seek for a deeper meaning behind corruption, and indeed, apparently believes that those who make the search add only "to our already excessive inventory of introspective crap," but is he not telling us that we are to be satisfied with a moralistic view of politics that looks only to distinguish "good" from "bad" politicians? Presumably we are to wait for the coming of the liberal hero who is to emerge and rescue us from the nasty Republicans.

Sixty years back Steffens recognized that such a superficial liberalism was inadequate, and I would suggest that his effort to probe the sources of corruption is relevant to the needs of our present situation. At some point in the unfolding Watergate saga we may find instructive Steffens' point that it is not enough to expose the crimes of the individual wrongdoer, and we will give our attention to the job of exposing and eliminating the social roots of a corrupted politics.

HERBERT SHAPIRO
Cincinnati, Ohio

Mr. Galbraith replies:

I respectfully concede Professor Shapiro his good view of Steffens, but surely then, such views being subjective, he must allow me mine, which is that Steffens is, or was, on the whole, a towering bore. Similarly I concede Mr. Shapiro his delight in deeper explanations. Maybe my adverse reaction to Steffens is explained by my exposure to the Cold War, the New Deal, and possibly even Woodrow Wilson, of whom I have a faint memory. But then he must allow me my view, which is that all is explained by the Steffens prose. Further and finally, if I genuflect, as would Steffens, while Professor Shapiro explores the deeper social forces bearing on the background of the modern Baltimore County politician, then my friend must allow me to say that Spiro Agnew was just another two-bit grafter and crook.

SIR: In his review of Philip Roth's work in the July *Atlantic* ("Looking for a Girl"), Richard Todd says that "what Roth has never done, and what he must yearn to do, is to create on the page a credible, whole, complex, desirable woman. Consider the museum of grotesques that he has given us instead."

Here he appropriately lists Sharon Shatzky, the zucchini lover of "Salad Days" in *My Life as a Man*; the Monkey of *Portnoy's Complaint*; Libby Hertz ("grim Libby") of *Letting Go*; Lydia and Maureen, the two faces of mad wifery, as well as Susan the Submissive, all from *My Life as a Man*; Lucy Nelson of *When She Was Good*; and finally, with a slight nod ("She was his first,

best girl"), Brenda Patimkin of *Goodbye Columbus*.

Missing from this group is, in fact, Roth's one "credible, whole, complex, desirable woman"—Martha Reganhart, the warm, harassed—even desperate—but above all, loving divorcée, mother of two wholly believable children, in *Letting Go*. To be sure, the Roth character loses her, and she him, most grotesquely—and even apart from the ghastly ending the relationship doesn't work out well, as it never does with Roth. But she was there. And he did create her on the page.

Roth may well yearn to do it again, but Mr. Todd to the contrary notwithstanding, he has, once upon a time, made the "imaginative excursion into the mind and senses of a woman worth knowing."

MARY S. PINKHAM
Cambridge, Mass.

CORRECTION:

In the course of writing my story, "Verlie I Say Unto You" (July *Atlantic*), at a certain point I needed a very Virginian name, and two well-known family names came to me: "Dabney" and "Stuart," and so I combined them and created (or thought I had created) "Dabney Stuart." This person is thought of by a woman in the story as "a shocking racial bigot."

I now learn that there is a Dabney Stuart, a distinguished poet and editor, in no way a bigot, and I am very sorry if my quite inadvertent use of his name has embarrassed him—(though I cannot imagine that anyone would have thought I meant him).

ALICE ADAMS
San Francisco, Calif.

PHOTO AND DRAWING CREDITS

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DÉTENTE THROUGH SOVIET EYES

Vague pledges, silent crowds

by Hedrick Smith

You can buy a recording of *Jesus Christ Superstar* on the Moscow black market this year, and anti-Stalinist books by Mandelstam and Bulgakov in limited edition. Many more copies were shipped abroad "to show the West how liberal we are," one Soviet citizen told the author.

This has been a schizophrenic season in Moscow. Some strange chemistry of the elements, both human and natural, has been at work. Muscovites complain of their worst spring in years, a kaleidoscopic and illogical sequence of bad weather: timid patches of sunshine, snow as late as May 19, hail in June, an uncertain summer.

The schizophrenia of the natural elements has carried over into human affairs as well, producing an illogical concatenation of events in matters large and small. Moscow's tourist season is in full swing and yet something fundamental is amiss: Red Square and the Lenin Mausoleum, meccas for both Soviet and foreign tourists, have been closed for repairs—for six months, no less.

And perish the thought, *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, those journalistic oracles of Communist Party and government which normally speak with one voice, disagreed briefly this spring—if only over the rules for breaking tie games in the national soccer league. (Soviet soccer is nearly asphyxiated by tedious ties.) For most Soviet males, this athletic controversy has

been a matter of greater personal consequence than the latest Nixon-Brezhnev meeting.

But on that plane, too, what Marxist-Leninist ideologists are fond of terming "historical contradictions" have been evident. The gregarious Mr. Brezhnev, having mourned the passing of President Pompidou of France and the departure of Chancellor Brandt of West Germany, has once again feted Richard Nixon as his sole surviving partner in détente, though he carefully sidestepped the American President's repeated efforts to emphasize their personal relationship as an essential ingredient of détente. Yet hedging his bets, he has also rediscovered the Democrats. When Senator Edward Kennedy visited Moscow last spring, he was ushered about with warm cordiality, like a potential President. Mr. Brezhnev took time out for a three-hour chat with former Ambassador Averell Harriman, not only to recall the old Soviet-American wartime collaboration but to convey his views on arms control and other vital issues to the dean of the Democratic Party's specialists on Soviet affairs.

With equal pragmatism of forethought, the Kremlin has in effect opened relations with the U.S. Congress by sending a delegation from the Supreme Soviet, the rubber-stamp Soviet parliament, to Capitol Hill. Suddenly, the Soviet press, which had been excoriating Congress as a hotbed of unreasonable anti-Nixonites and chiding some liberal Democrats as secret opponents of détente (especially those who have voiced support for Soviet dissidents, and raised questions about past and proposed U.S.-Soviet trade agreements), switched to proclaiming the importance of "useful contacts in interparliamentary relations." It has become

fashionable again in Moscow to advertise the bipartisan nature of the American support for détente.

The Soviets have been suffering ideological schizophrenia, too: The media have thundered regularly against the pernicious influence on Washington's policies of the American military-industrial complex. Yet Prime Minister Aleksei Kosygin and his top industrialists and traders seem to find the biggest, most powerful and influential defense contractors among their favorite partners for trade. Eight of last year's top ten Defense Department contractors—Lockheed, General Electric, Boeing, McDonnell-Douglas, United Aircraft, General Dynamics, Textron, Rockwell International—are either doing business in Moscow or dickering about it with the Soviets.

The seasonal ambivalence has affected the treatment of dissidents. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn was dramatically exiled, and his friend and longtime landlord, cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, who used to joke privately, "I am the only man in the world with a Nobel Laureate for a gardener," was allowed to leave for England. Then, the long-suffering Valery Panov, who is Jewish, and his wife, Galina, both former dancers of the Kirov Ballet in Leningrad, were permitted to emigrate despite refusals and harassments in the past.

But lesser figures, whose names mean little to most Westerners, have suffered more painful destinies.

In mid-May Gabriel Superfin, once Solzhenitsyn's amanuensis, was tried after being held incommunicado for ten months in prison at Orel, about 225 miles from Moscow and out of the way of foreign press attention. He was charged with circulating anti-Soviet slander and sending it abroad. Although he is a slender intellectual of fragile health in his late twenties, the judge sentenced Superfin to five years in a strict regime labor camp and two more years in exile. Friends fear he will never emerge alive.

Another friend of Solzhenitsyn's, Yefim Etkind, was peremptorily expelled from the Writers' Union and fired from his post as Professor of Literature at Leningrad's Herzen Institute. Friends said the secret police were out to get him because they believed that manuscripts of *Gulag Archipelago* were typed on his typewriter, and that for many months Mr. Etkind had known where the manuscripts were secreted. "What is so depressing," said one Moscow writer, "is that he was stripped of his academic posts and his academic degrees in a secret ballot by his colleagues on the basis of a vague note from the KGB [secret police]. Fifty-seven people voted, and not one had the courage to defend him. That is what has happened to us."

Hedrick Smith is Moscow correspondent for the New York Times.

The Panovs survived their gauntlet, but a group of Jewish scientists, fired after applying to emigrate to Israel a couple of years back and thus hard-pressed to keep up their scientific qualifications through months of unemployment and ostracism from official scientific affairs, were subjected to severe pressures for trying to organize an unofficial seminar in early July to join foreign scientists in reading scientific papers (see "Moscow: Notes on a Scientific Conference" by Earl Callen, *The Atlantic*, May, 1974, page 16). Other less celebrated Jews than Panov were hunted, tailed, threatened by police toughs in the dark of night, or arrested in their beds in the morning and carted off to jail so as not to disturb the gloss of cooperation of the Nixon-Brezhnev summit with any untoward demonstrations.

Inconsistencies have bedeviled other walks of life in this era of détente. Officially, East-West scientific exchanges enjoy the highest policy blessing. Delegations on environmental pollution, endangered species, cancer research, or earthquake prediction exchange carefully prearranged visits of screened participants. Toasts are raised to the cause of greater exchange of knowledge.

Yet one balmy surprise was the sudden cancellation of gala celebrations planned for May 23 in honor of the 250th anniversary of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, an occasion which had promised to attract more foreign Nobel Laureates and other Western scientists, and thus promote more face-to-face scientific contact, than any other single occasion since World War II. Elaborate plans were made. Then abruptly, after months of preparations, it was cancelled, with the public explanation that it threatened to interfere with the Soviet election campaign ending June 16. It was an excuse of such feeble credibility, given the long-term preparations for both events, that few Soviet officials or propagandists even bothered to use it with foreign contacts.

Moreover, without publicity in the central Moscow press, celebrations were actually held by Academy affiliates in outlying republican capitals like Minsk, Alma-Ata, Ashkhabad, Tallinn, Dushanbe, Baku, Tashkent, and Riga.

One Moscow scientist, learning through a forerunner of the provincial celebrations, remarked: "Well, that goes to show—the authorities simply did not want a lot of Western scientists in Moscow at one time. That would have been too much of a good thing, a risk of too much candid conversation. Who knows what might have come up—freer travel abroad for Soviet scientists? More access to foreign scientific publications? Greater intellectual freedom generally? Human rights? Sakharov? It may sound strange to you, but obviously our authorities found it less embarrassing to cancel the

celebrations than to go through with them. After all, who in the West remembers even now that the celebrations were called off and stops to wonder why?"

Still, along with rainy disappointments, there have been patches of cultural sunshine. Socialist realism last season embraced some unexpected eccentricities. Andrei Voznesensky gave two of his bolder poetry readings during which he challenged "the Pornography of the Spirit" of dogmatic cultural watchdogs, lampooned the Cromwellian sexual prudery of Soviet public life, and dared to demand to know the location of the grave of Vsevolod Meyerhold, the brilliant avant-garde theater director, who died somewhere in the Gulag Archipelago of Stalin's prisons.

The talented Yuri Liubimov, director of Moscow's most daring theater, the Taganka, presented *Wooden Horses*, a pair of moving one-act plays by Fyodor Abramov, who writes with unvarnished candor about the numbing struggle for survival in Russian villages and the decline of moral decency and character among villagers under Soviet rule. In one scene Abramov gives a brutal view of some of the injustices of Stalin's collectivization of agriculture.

The rival Sovremennik theater played another pair of dramas, *Provincial Anecdotes*, by the late Aleksandr Vampilov, that expose sexual promiscuity and flashes of unreasoned brutality in provincial life, a dissonant portrait of the New Soviet Man. The Moscow Art Theater, heretofore tame and banal under its new director, Oleg Yefremov, has ventured *The Sleep of Reason*, a Spanish play about Goya. The artist, deaf and outnumbered but brave in his opposition to the state, proclaims himself more true to his people than is the state in a way that for some Moscow intellectuals evokes the struggle of Solzhenitsyn.

Modest as these may sound to Westerners, each marks a departure for Moscow and helps make this the most interesting theater season in several years.

Another surprise of 1974 was the publication of two long-awaited books—an uncensored version of *Master and Margarita*, Mikhail Bulgakov's satirical fantasy about persecution of innocents under Stalin, and collected verses of Osip Mandelstam, the great poet who died in a Stalinist camp in the 1930s after writing a devastating verse about the dictator himself.

But unfortunately, the Mandelstam was bowdlerized and only a pitiful few thousand copies of either book went on sale here. The great bulk of both editions was shipped abroad—"to show the West how liberal we are," said one lady sarcastically. By contrast, the first openly worshipful fictional portrait of Stalin published in two decades was given mass circulation of more than 500,000 by *Young Guards*, a Moscow youth magazine.

"Don't misunderstand—this is no cultural thaw,"

commented a man who went through the torturous twists of Khrushchev's liberalization in the late 1950s and early 1960s. "What you see now is just a safety valve, a sop to the 'house liberals' who collaborate."

For most Muscovites, the fluctuations of literary life are too esoteric, too finely calibrated to be of much interest. What moves the element of Soviet youth that considers itself most modish (to a large degree, the teen-age and university grandchildren of the elite) is the pursuit of the pop life-style of the West: jeans, hair, and above all, rock.

A black-market commodity in hot demand this year was the recording of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, which has the double allure of a theoretically forbidden medium and forbidden message. By now, black-market prices have slipped somewhat from the staggering 80 to 100 rubles (\$110 to \$135) that a *Superstar* LP commanded early in the year. The end of the jamming of Voice of America has made it easier for Soviet youth to make their own tapes and cassettes. What is more, a few Soviet rock groups include some *Superstar* numbers in their repertoires, and at private, invitation-only concerts, they initiate their less world-wise comrades into the high sacraments of the mod life.

For a faction of the old-fashioned Soviet Cold Warriors near the summit of power, *Superstar* represents the epitome of the bourgeois cultural infiltration that they feel must be stopped. This summer, the Communist Party decreed yet another full-year course for university-level students in Marxism-Leninism as an antidote.

But privately, some Communist higher-ups have relaxed about rock, having discovered that among Soviet youth, jeans, hair, and rock music have not been harbingers of a dangerous counterculture but rather harmless outlets for their own offspring. Secretly, high-level Soviet executives and foreign trade administrators accept *Superstar* records from foreign businessmen as a prestige gift for their older children just as happily as they accept Japanese watches, French gold pens, or Ronson cigarette lighters for themselves.

But in this realm, too, there is a deeper and more traditional schizophrenia of the Russian spirit at work. The Soviet absorption of things Western, the kind of cultural osmosis that takes place far more in Moscow or Leningrad than in the vast Russian hinterlands, quite naturally catches the eye of Western visitors. Yet an equally strong, if not stronger, countercurrent today is the nostalgia for the Russian past—for returning to the Russian roots, for admiring the rich cultural heritage of the Czarist era and finding strength in the seeming moral purity of the unspoiled countryside.

One symptom is the surprising revival enjoyed

now by recordings of Aleksandr Vertinsky, a stage and cabaret singer of Czarist vintage who for twenty-five years charmed Russian emigrés in Paris, Warsaw, New York, and Shanghai before returning to Russia during World War II. Vertinsky was a crooner who built a following as vast as Rudy Vallee's. He was less dashing than Rudolph Valentino, more intimate than Maurice Chevalier.

His musical palette was rich in romance and roco decadence. What came to be known as Vertinsky "ariettas" told melancholy narratives of girls who go astray, of unreliable beaus, of the cruelty of big cities, and the inevitability of fate and death. Sometimes these themes merged with visions of a remote, exotic, and beautiful life—of "lilac Negroes," "parrots who sobbed in French," little Creole boys, luxurious yachts, and dens of San Francisco. The current reprints of his old records include such standbys of his own compositions as "Magnolia Tango," "Farewell Supper," and "Madame, the Leaves Are Already Falling."

Some of those who eschew the unmistakable escapism in Western rock or the Vertinsky revival find theirs in the Russian countryside. Leonid Brezhnev himself is said to have wept at the Kremlin showing of *Kalina Krasnaya* (*The Red Snowball Tree*), which has been this year's movie sensation.

It is the story of a village-born, city-corrupted ex-convict who teeters between going straight with the help of generous-hearted peasants or falling back into league with his old gang of thieves, who represent the ultimate of urban corruption—necking, petting, smoking, leering, leather-jacketed, trench-coated, Western-style hooligans. Vasily Shukshin, the author, director, and main actor, conveys the notion that man can only recapture his morality by returning to his roots in the ethically pure Russian countryside. The hero, who cannot quite make the grade and thus offers some real dramatic interest, is killed by the old gang but not before Shukshin, a well-known rural writer, displays his celebrated love of nature.

His confused hero finds moments of comfort in kissing or fondling birches, whom he calls his brides. The camera not only caresses village scenes and authentic Russian country faces but at "poignant moments lingers on the ruins of a rural church or icons hanging in the corner of peasant homes."

"In a Western movie, those might simply be icons or church in the background," explained a modish young Russian in his mid-twenties. "But to us, it is a reminder of The Church or Embattled Religion, and everyone understands."

Here is a milder version of the kind of full-blooded neo-Slavophilism of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn whose "Letter to Our Supreme Leaders" so surprised many Western admirers by urging that Russia disgorge its Eastern European empire, pull

back into itself, throw off the alien ideology of Communism, and find some holy future-past by restoring the Russian Orthodox Church as its moral core.

Solzhenitsyn may be banished but Russophilism, nonetheless, enjoys a resonant revival. Scholars advance to protect the purity of the Russian mother tongue and to protest corrupting impurities and borrowings from the West. Restoration of historical monuments is pressed forward. So notable is the interest of a large section of educated youth in the church, with its rich art, its icons, its choirs, its architecture, that *Pravda* has taken to worrying that Soviet youth are too indifferent to Communism, too admiring of the church as the vessel and embodiment of the Russian cultural heritage. One senses anew the old conflict of Slavophiles and Westernizers in Russian life.

There is an echo, as well, in the nationalistic economics of some high officials like Valentin Shashin, the Soviet oil minister, who caused a stir by shrugging off prospects for big new oil deals with capitalist countries, implying that Russia should reserve its energy resources for itself. Privately, other elements of the leadership are said to be wary of selling off Siberia's riches to the West. Those who are promoting East-West trade quite often feel the need to insist defensively that each trade of natural resources begets a good return.

If anything, the undertow of latent Russian nationalism is likely to prove more powerful in the long run than the surface current of Westernization highlighted by détente.

To many Russians, détente is a slogan, albeit a welcome one, a matter of stratospheric politics which does not touch them unless they happen to be part of that thin veneer of Soviet life that is directly in contact with the West. This is the layer of foreign traders, diplomats, officials, propagandists, poets, scholars, dancers, industrialists, who form a special class, one of whose main privileges is to deal with Westerners and to travel to the West.

In many ways, large and small, Soviets will one-up each other to gain access to this special privileged world and to savor its benefits. Scientists, for example, explain that the first scientific-exchange delegations to America were heavily overloaded with administrators who pulled rank to get on the delegations ahead of scientists whose actual work made them more natural candidates. "Hurry up and invite all our big shots," said one scientist, "so that we can go later on."

On a more mundane level, in a Russian children's hospital not long ago, a senior nurse spotted a crowd of Russian children mobbing an American boy (who was a patient) for little "smile" buttons. She shooed the Russian children away, and when they were out of sight, the nurse asked for buttons

for herself and other members of the staff. Some got two. Later, the children were allowed to return and get what was left.

This rank-pulling, this split-level nature of Soviet society in which the privileged minority gets better or totally different treatment from the great plebeian mass, helps to explain the schizophrenia which is inherent in the Soviet approach to détente.

It is the celebrities like Solzhenitsyn, Rostropovich, and the Panovs, who left the Soviet Union while their virtually unknown colleagues faced harsher pressures. It is the prestigious Establishment liberals like Voznesensky or Abramov, who sometimes get away with experiments in social criticism while younger, lesser writers face more severe censorship. (That indeed may help explain the absence of young new writers on the scene.)

It is the governmental-economic elite that negotiates with the American military-industrial giants while the masses are fed polemics against the military-industrial complex. It is the selected delegations of scientists who travel west, while the more amorphous congregation of scholars who would have gathered around the Academy of Sciences celebration is denied a chance.

The latest Nixon-Brezhnev summit had this same curious split-level character. When the President flew into Moscow, the gregarious, bushy-browed Soviet leader was in an ebullient mood, welcoming Nixon to a jovial personal reunion. Several hundred selected Soviet citizens were bused to the airport welcome, and when Nixon approached, they waved little Soviet and American flags but made no sound—it suggested a crowd scene of extras in an old silent movie.

For all the renewed warmth at the summit, there was the same old restraint at the curbsides in Moscow—a gulf between the American leader and the Russian people. At four or five places along the seventeen-mile motorcade route into town, carefully screened crowds were posted. But elsewhere, ordinary folk were kept back of building fronts or almost out of sight by police. As the visit progressed, the leaders boated on Brezhnev's yacht on the Black Sea and strolled on the beach near the government's secluded dachas outside Yalta. The world learned of the meetings, but Soviet newspaper readers and television viewers caught only formal glimpses of the two men sitting at negotiating tables or signing documents. The Soviet press skipped the human color and essence of their talks and left Soviets to decipher the impersonal and often abstruse texts of their signed agreements.

Actually, this split-level treatment is not surprising because détente involves ideological schizophrenia of the most fundamental sort for the Soviets. Cooperation with a still-declared enemy causes immense confusion in a theocratic state and it fosters a deep and pragmatic cynicism about the

domestic double standards of détente among the better-heeled elements of society.

A deeper ambivalence pervaded the summit. On trade, environmental protection, or medical research, the two sides could sign loosely worded pledges to cooperate. On secondary arms issues they could give up the unused option of building more anti-missile defenses, or setting loose limits on underground nuclear testing. But they could not trust each other on the heart of the matter: halting the race to develop offensive nuclear arms, especially multiple-shot warheads for intercontinental weapons.

Some plain people got the message. "Look at our leaders signing agreements," beamed a matron in a hotel reading the morning's *Pravda* featuring Nixon and Brezhnev on the front page. "It is good." Then her smile faded and more soberly she added, "But that is only a trade agreement. What about arms limitation? What do we need those terrible things for? We need peace. Our generation knew war, but we must not let that happen to our children."

The ordinary citizens are torn between conflicting pronouncements from above. They do not quite know whether to love or hate, whether to admire or fear, whether to mingle or meekly stand aside. They hear détente is bringing economic dividends to their country, and in the midst of what by Soviet standards is a consumerist trend, they hope for some of the celebrated consumerism of the West. But they are denied modern stereo sets, modish clothing, big cars, private homes, and other material possessions they associate with the "good life" beyond their frontiers. They are a warm, friendly people. Their pent-up curiosity about the outside world is immense. Vast numbers of them long to reach out to inquire and understand and then to share and enjoy, and they have to be painfully schooled like children to recognize that these are privileges only for an upper stratum, a trusted elite.

Carefully, clinically, and so far successfully, the Soviet leadership has been trying to sterilize détente, to purge it of infectious political content. Just as carefully, though not quite as harshly, it has kept its own people well shielded from a rounded picture of Western living standards that would kindle potentially irresistible rising expectations among a great mass of Soviet consumers.

"We are so disappointed," an intellectual in his fifties reflected sadly. "We had expected détente to make our life easier. But we find your government, your Nixon, is just like ours. All this talk about preventing war is for newspaper headlines. We all know war was unthinkable during the Cold War just as during détente. We wanted a more reasonable life, where our work made more sense and did not meet constant political interference, where we could enjoy some of what you take for granted and then reject it as you are doing. We wanted liberalization. So what has détente brought us?" □

TIGERS IN THE NIGHT

Thoughts on turning 30 (all right, 31)

by Mopsy Strange Kennedy

“‘Are you still married?’ an old friend asked me. ‘Cute!’—as if it were some quaint onion dip.”

I had just given birth to my second daughter when something happened that reminded me of the peculiar nature of passing time, which is what most concerns me about being thirty. I was then a feckless child of twenty-seven, and I was writing an article about co-education at Yale. Because of my maternal state, I asked the girl I was interviewing to come to my house. There I was, a married, slightly working mother of two and wife of a law student, breastfeeding my baby in the living room in front of this girl and her boyfriend. Despite the confusion, I was happy. These were all things I had once wanted and dreamt about and here they were; certainly they were things I would have noticed with envy had I been the interviewed college girl.

The girl and her boyfriend told me they were living together, proudly and openly (an art form just barely invented when I was her age); she was talking about going to graduate school (my friends tended to *marry* people in graduate school), and said if they ever married, and if they ever had children, they, being a two-career family, would

probably put their children in a day-care center. How shall I describe my feelings, mixed as they were by postnatal emotional chaos, the neurotic voyeurism of journalism, and the octopus curiosity I generally feel about other people's lives?

Although I was at a certain apex of my life, I was the one watching *her* from what seemed a precarious and vulnerable place. I felt that we were at an important seam between generational moments, and that she, the younger one, had the upper hand. I could feel the universe I was standing on slither uncomfortably under my feet.

Just a few weeks after that, the words Women's Liberation Movement—somehow redolent of war and grim seriousness—fell upon my confused ears, and I realized that whatever I felt about it, it would generate (I want to say “wreak”) incredible change around me. It was a sort of shot at Sarajevo, disrupting everything after, and casting a new interpretation on everything that went before. From the minute I heard about it, a thousand dialectical impulses sprang up in me, armaments for the arguments, many of them ferociously antipathetic to the spirit of women's lib and its propaganda, that I now had to have with my culture, my friends, my times, and God forbid, myself.

MSK: How could I complain? I've been dealt a good hand. My husband doesn't need to be jargonized into feeling a desire to help take care

of his own children; indeed, I find that somewhat vulgar. He doesn't lead me into a noxious way of life. And he supports me while I write articles. If that is oppression, play on!

Women's Lib Zealot: I'm all right, Jack. Cultivate your own garden. Don't you realize there are thousands of people for whom this is not the case?

I think my initial reaction grew from the fact that women's liberation came along when I was swimming through a particular biological moment in my life, that is, childbirth and after, and I felt that women's liberation took an incredibly narrow and sarcastic view of babies and children as slave-makers and supper-vomiters. I felt that my womb and its amazingly protean offspring were being given short shrift by these women who were, therefore, no Sisters of mine. Women's liberation also seemed to have created certain hard-to-swallow myths, straw women, weakling ladies-in-waiting who, they claimed, represented the universal image of women in the minds of men, a pitiful half-truth, I felt.

The movement, it seemed to me, conveniently overlooked thousands of ferocious, Tabasco-spirited women, strong, brave, successful, who made their way without putting themselves under the banner of feminism. I supposed that element was shoved under the rug because it didn't reinforce movement rhetoric. Why have a perfectly healthy child pose for Easter Seals? And men my age, either going off to fight in Vietnam or taking detours to avoid going, were being pincered unmercifully, being given no credit either for their particular oppression with respect to the draft, or their general human pain.

WLZ: I want to get to know you as a person.

MSK: I'm afraid that's not possible. You see I'm actually a raccoon.

WLZ: Why so hostile, Sister?

MSK: I just don't want your bandwagon jumping on me.

WLZ: Why not? Our Time has come!

MSK: If you were really interested in me as a person, you wouldn't need an ideology to justify yourself.

Mopsy Strange Kennedy, thirty-oneish, is a free-lance writer who lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with her husband and two children.

Yet, it dogged one, like a persistent salesman (sorry, salesperson). Of all the winds that shook the house of my twenties, the war, the "radicalization" of almost everyone around me, and the sexual revolution, the cold sharp gusts of liberation worked their mysteries in the most subtle and enduring way. I look around me at the gang of women who, partly thanks to women's lib, are pounding at the door of professions like law and medicine. I think back to the pastoral, soon-to-be-wife-of-breadwinner life my friends and I led in college. I note the change in alumnae notes of that watershed time. Among recent alumnae, one rarely finds a woman so totally aimless that she is not winding up for law school (the professed goal of even beauty queens) or medical school or at least public health, whereas the women who graduated from college with me hoped to write novels or work in publishing or generally partake of what one friend called "pre-life."

Because women's lib came along just when it did, many people I know slipped under the wire and made themselves into only slightly dilatory Ph.D.'s or doctors or lawyers. But that made for a speckled landscape. A divorced mother, once married to a lawyer, who used to think that for all her brains she'd never qualify for more than a peripheral buying job in a bookstore, now goes to law school. My divorced sister-in-law is now a psychiatrist. Some girls I knew grew up to find that the Tupperware party was over, and they were left to shrug apologetically and say, "I'm just a housewife," or, pointing to the symbol of income and professionalism across the room, "I'm married to him." Much as I envy the motivated Ph.D.'s out there with their two careers and their own incomes, it irritates me that women's lib has created a shriveled minority of child-raisers and home-stayers who have to apologize for the lot they were raised to enjoy. And if they're lucky enough eventually to "go back into teaching" when their children are older, they are accused of doing ninny girl's work.

A Friend: I hated Up the Sandbox because it showed that women could only fantasize about the real world, not partake of it.

MSK: But that's real too. Do you want to liquidate that just because you don't like it or want it for yourself?

Partly because of the people it leaves behind, I've always objected to the term "consciousness-raising" which seems to equate the height of consciousness with loyalty to the feminist viewpoint. Raised consciousness, raised fists, stuff a fever, starve a husband. I watched my friends' lives suddenly whirl around quite differently according to

the hidden choreography of consciousness-raising; people who married under one "contract" either changed that or got divorced. Married people didn't live together, sometimes, in the interests of their separate careers; single people lived together sharing the work in radically new ways (which is why I used to call it the Men's Incarceration Movement), or in groups. The word "liberated" became as variously and subjectively interpreted as the Wizard of Oz, but people seemed to be applying it to themselves as often as possible in order to get a piece of the action and to placate its guilt-producing monster. "He does the shopping; we're liberated." "She can sleep with anyone she wants; we're liberated." "We go 50-50 on the kids; we're liberated." "Please leave me alone—we gave to liberation at the office."

WLZ: Whom do you admire among women?

MSK: The same ones I've always admired. Penelope Gilliatt for braininess and wit; Sophia Loren for sex appeal and spirit and motherhood. I admire Carly Simon for singing her own songs. Many others. Barbra Streisand, Roslyn Drexler, Hannah Green, Jane Jacobs.

WLZ: Where are your feminists?

MSK: I don't necessarily admire them (though I like Gloria Steinem). Talking about your gender all the time seems to me like sitting down at your typewriter and writing only about your typewriter.

WLZ: Have you dropped anyone from your list?

MSK: I'll have to say I used to devote many hours to Jackie Kennedy, but now she seems too much a pastry and not enough a steak.

Feminism—all movements of the last decade for that matter—reminds me of the song that says "Love is going to make a fool out of you/ You do the things it wants you to." A lot of this movement struck me, in its infancy, as reeking of desperate blackmail, but a lot of it proved to be very good for the world of my late twenties.

It certainly brought about a change in what people—some my age and most younger—did with their lives. In its first springtime every girl I met, it seemed, was either going or about to go to graduate school—or had gone and wore her Ph.D. on her sleeve. (I remember a conversation with a woman to whom I said, "Where did you get those nice shoes?" She said, "Well, when I was getting my Ph.D. I lived near a great shoe store.") The term "male chauvinist pig" became a new and useful diagnostic tool. My theory has been that to be

"liberated," sensitive intelligent men don't need to be hit over the head with a nightstick of jargon and guilt pressures—their "consciousness" is already floating far "above" the fray; men in the middle needed to be educated, but they are eager to go along, if only to make other people shut up; men at the bottom, however, can now be categorized in a new and more potent way—a new name for an old disease. And when I want to get my husband to clean the house, I find the term handier and more loaded with up-to-date legitimacy than the old limp and derisive teen-age terms, like "selfish monster from the black lagoon" and "lazy creep" that I'd been using before.

MSK: See what you've made me do?

WLZ: What?

MSK: I can't even listen to a nice, silly song I liked in high school without the impulse to feminist analysis. I heard Ringo's resurrected hit the other day and found myself thinking: "You're sixteen (worship of youth), you're beautiful (sex object) and you're mine (possessive) . . . You walked out of my dreams (relegating her to the realm of fantasy) and into my car (outmoded etiquette of chauvinism; can't she drive?), now you're my angel divine (putting her on a pedestal which implies put-down) . . . You're my baby (infantilism), you're my pet (chattel, puppy dog), we fell in love on the night we met (specter of marriage obliterates career alternatives) . . .

WLZ: Good!

MSK: Bad: I like the song and you've ruined it for me. You've just washed my brain and I can't do a thing with it. I'm mad at you.

WLZ: Women in our culture have been programmed to suppress their feelings of anger.

MSK: Yeah? Come over someday when I'm sinking my Transylvanian fangs into some repairman's neck. Watch me throw frying pans at the icebox.

WLZ: I notice you're still using domestic weapons.

I can almost see in some dim room a circle of women sliding with alarm to the edge of their chairs waiting to catch me or slap a collective hand across my mouth as I say—as I deeply believe—that the backsliding life of marriage and children has given me more pleasure than anything else I've ever done.

WLZ: But more than your own accomplishments? You know having children is temporary. Basically it drives you crazy, doesn't it? It's simply not enough.

MSK: Nothing is enough! The tapeworm always wants more, always. But this is more enough than anything else.

Of course it's true that having children has tamed the moment, but it doesn't stop me from dwelling on the future—in fact, having children has opened up a veritable supermarket of speculation. I look at my small, still largely guileless, daughters and wonder what unimagined new Beliefs will come along and claim their allegiance. Since I know people of my age who have gone from prep-ness to hippiness, to Scientology, to Transcendental Meditation, to the Maharaj Ji to white magic to Jesus (so often ending up at law school despite all), I can imagine that my children will probably find themselves engulfed by new and disturbing cults that haven't been dreamt up yet. Now that I am over thirty and they are under thirty (under seven for that matter), I find myself biting into a sandwich of time, comparing the flavors of my generation, my parents' generation, and my children's generation. How was it to have been about thirty during World War II—how will it be to be a teen-ager toward the end of this century?

My generation believed in the hallucinogenic shiftiness of things, and also believed that, while maybe not perfectible, the scene was greatly improvable, as was the self. One could watch "changes" Out There in the evolution of the Beatles and Bob Dylan, mini-lifetimes jammed into a decade. Jerry Rubin has not only outgrown radical politics but has actually renounced some of his old beliefs, not just shed them off. One way that I know another year has passed is that each spring my friend Pennell (slightly over thirty but moving gamely abreast of the times) reports back from his latest new thing—England, India, the drug culture, Africa, tribe living, California, hippie philosophy (he wrote his thesis on Heidegger)—like a turtle whose back is covered with timely billboards. Being thirty just now is peculiarly comforting because so many people admired even by the younger generation (I notice Janis Joplin was born one month after I was) bumped famously from stage to stage, from salvation to salvation just when we did, giving a kind of virtue to the age. The message seems to be that even in a youth culture, life is believed to be getting better, not worse. The people who invented the expression "never trust anyone over thirty" are now themselves over thirty—and the moral of that is self-evident.

Another barometer of the durability of old notions is marriage, and what happens to it. The sur-

living marriages I know, made at the time in our lives when it was fashionable to get married (our early twenties), are either out of date in some respect, or so eccentric they don't lend themselves to theory. I know couples who have adopted the spirit of the times, have made a self-conscious effort to "do" marriage as an adventure, who go on couples-sensitivity weekends together and do TM nightly, who strive for a kind of independence without necessarily having affairs.

Some people of my generation, however, passed right out of one time zone and into another around about their thirtieth year. Their currency changed on them overnight. Most notably, marriages conceived in perfectly good faith between people in their twenties suddenly found themselves egregiously wrong in the eyes of the new values. I know several "straight" monogamous, gin-drinking, "male chauvinist" Bachrach-photographed men and their wives who suddenly found they were wearing last decade's conventions and coming out at the wrists. In some of these marriages, it was the man who found the old life intolerable because the counterculture—not working, smoking grass, etc.—was more compelling. In others, the "good wife" found that she was infused with a new vision of independence, rage at lost time, and, more specifically, rage at the husband who had duped her—and so departed.

Marriage, I think, has been given a bad name by the new-tooth generation pushing us out because living together has supplanted it on one side and divorce has ended it on the other. For a lot of people (mostly women) who got divorced around thirty, divorce is a sort of Ph.D., a point of growth and self-analysis and change, a thumbing-of-nose at marriage. "I'm making the acquaintance of myself for the first time," Sara told us, after divorce and removal to California. I watch her with interest because I know that she will be like a bee loaded with new honey each time she comes to visit us. She can sleep with men younger than herself or her own age—whatever—to the point of boredom. She can live in various communal ways, she can baby-sit for the son of the man who wrote *The Massage Book* and get paid—not in the vulgar currency of the uptight East, but rather in massages and an hour of bioenergetic therapy. Divorce, as written on Sara, is not all failure and dreariness and loneliness; it has a distinct character, a leaving-home-ness and a growing-up-ness that many people I know earnestly recommend.

And here we are, back in marriage. ("Are you still married?" an old friend who turned up asked me. "Cute!"—as if it were some quaint onion dip.) I, perhaps defensively, choose to see living together as much more like marriage than it pretends to be. Our living-together unmarried friends seem to experience the same conflicts and good times and bad times we do, with fewer children, less furni-

ture, and no mortgages. If they are getting away with murder, while we, poor fools, sit here together year after year repeating old jokes to each other, then maybe I'm not seeing clearly. I do have an annoying habit of saying to my husband late at night, "Are you sure you wouldn't rather be married to a lawyer who made a wad?" My friend Jarnes plays it another way: "Pretend you are describing me to your second wife after my untimely death," she says to her husband, and he obligingly responds, "She was an ineffable combination of Harpo Marx and Joan of Arc."

Guidance Counselor: What would you like to be, if you could be anything?

MSK: The most famous woman in America from 9 to 1 every day. The rest of the day I'd like to spend playing with my kids and eating Sara Lee cakes and reading novels.

GC: Ha ha. Yes. But have you fulfilled your Western Civ. requirements? Have you got your sciences under your belt?

One reason I respect, in a fearful sort of way, the gulch called the generation gap is that one day when the shadows were falling over my late twenties, after a great deal of worrying and scolding and dreaming, I realized that if I was ever to understand the nature of my struggle with the younger-than-me generation, I would have to go to their country, the bizarre and mysterious land of LSD. The minute I swallowed this little symbol of the distance between me and them, I realized that everything I had said about "drugs" before was about as informed as a nun lecturing on sex. The whole nature of the experience was in such a different universe of image and metaphor-come-true and symbolism that ordinary language doesn't have the means to convey it.

I noticed, after my fiery trip, that among the many people with whom I shared my amazing revelations, a curious division occurred. Younger people said, with almost one bored voice, "Yeah, sure we know, it's great." People of my age and older said, like hundreds of Rockettes kicking together, "I'm afraid I'd lose myself. I've been building up this ego for almost thirty years and I don't want to have it fall apart now." The difference made me realize how tied we are to the ideas of our own generation, existing as they do side-by-side with their opposites, like the ingredients of a baked Alaska. Younger people seemed amazingly heedless of the danger; older ones were fearful only of that. I didn't take LSD because I was a hippie, nor did I do it without incredible apprehension, but I suppose I felt that my particular ego

had something to gain from it. Afterwards, I saw how insulting many people found my through-the-looking-glass experiences, how personally threatening it seemed, because they didn't want to believe that something so enormous could be had for the swallowing, and not as a result of years of study and discipline. Neither did I. But I could feel myself becoming a Trip Chauvinist Pig. The whole thing was an odd experience of being stranded in mid-generation, because people my own age wouldn't come along, and people younger than me had other qualities which I, in my underlying stuffiness, found objectionable and alien. However, it will be a useful little parable to remember when my children are taking their own trips in the future.

One of the habits of my generation is psychotherapy. An astonishing majority of the people I know lead this mysterious other life in the offices of men and women we never meet, talking about their problems. I always think that when three such people are gathered together, a simultaneous concordance of ghosts plays about the edges of the situation—the ghosts of their psychiatrists Louis and Harold and Bob are in invisible contact with their patients. I've learned, for instance, that when one woman I know clears her throat and bravely speaks up, or gives vent to her famously repressed anger, a voice from beyond is prodding her silently to go to it.

This seems to be a development of the last decade. I knew a girl in college who once went to a psychiatrist, sat there silently for forty-five minutes, then tearfully admitted her true mission: "I want a diaphragm." In those days only the truly crazy or misdirected saw a shrink, and what is now regarded as a normal teen-age sex life was an occasion for guilt or perhaps neurosis. Nowadays, people go not because they see tigers in the night, but reflexively, to help work out life's normal conflicts. I see the "thirty" guillotine falling between the people who still believe in Freud and the younger ones who conceive of their problems, scenes, whatever, in such a different way that they seek a different kind of therapist—a Primalist, psychodramatist, couples group, family therapist, lay analyst of one or another kind, Gestalt therapist—and if the patient is female, often another woman. A thirty-year-old woman I know symbolized the change by leaping over the wall, out of analysis into a groovier, more radical therapy, with a woman of her own age. "I realized I didn't have the problems my analyst thought. I'm uncovering completely different ones with my new therapist and I'm much happier." People on the upslope don't talk about "sickness" versus "getting well"—it's working on and working out, and "my issues." Of course you have a psychiatrist—you have a dentist, don't you? "And don't say shrink," says Carol, "it sounds like they're reducing you. Say expander."

They: Well, after all, do you like being thirty?

MSK: Something's lost and something's gained, as they say. But I feel I can squeeze more out of less now. It's more deep and purple than being twenty.

People do have a terrible tendency to act as if the word "thirty" were synonymous with something wholly undesirable, like cancer. At worst, I find myself folding my life in two or three about here, and wondering how many more periods till menopause, and how many more shopping days till the end of my life. But I'm trying to avoid the pejorative use of the word old. I am reconciling myself to the idea that I am crawling toward a mirage of a Coke bottle that turns into a mirage of a Pepsi bottle; it changes, and I never quite get there, but that's the suspense in the mystery story, even the pleasure. Not only that—I enjoy watching my friends improve, deepen, shall I say succeed. I think people of my generation who have "gone into the next segment" have gotten something for their money. People are actually more successful, or changed: lawyers have become photographers, teachers have become therapists, those who aren't

burdened with a mortgage move about interestingly, and those who are fixed in place have pleasant houses where they once had ratty apartments. Someone I last saw in the fifth grade wearing his little reindeer sweater now works in a cabinet-making collective. The other day Tino Nivola, the sculptor, was playing voluptuously with his baby grandson and asked rhetorically, "Why does everyone have to grow up? Why can't some people remain children?" The idea appeals to me. As it is, though, some of my friends have been alive so long they've already been reincarnated here on earth a couple of times. Sometimes I think I'm too tired for another round of adolescence in my children—storminess and secrecy and, God knows, David Cassidy orgasmettes.

As for us, maybe we could begin a Thirties Liberation Movement, and get together to throw darts at posters of teen-age idols, proudly count our gray hairs, and reminisce about the Eisenhower era. I'm surprised that someone hasn't performed for us in our thirties the kind of cosmetic surgery on the language that has made old people into senior citizens and poor people into the disadvantaged—but we'll forge on, wearing our faces like wrinkled dresses. We may be biodegradable, but we're not dead yet. □

THE DODOS

Ancient maiden, old manster.
Jack Spat and Ginny Spit,
he likes no woman, she no man.
Joined by contrary biases, each prizes
wherein the other most displeases,
what most despises.
Feet apart and heads together,
drunk as two Pisas, they lean
on one another, they confabulate.
Brute, she says. Bitch, says he.
They get along not at all,
which is to say, fabulously.

by Irving Feldman

TWO PASSAGES FROM THE ILIAD

Translated by Robert Fitzgerald

AN ENCOUNTER Book III Lines 1-29

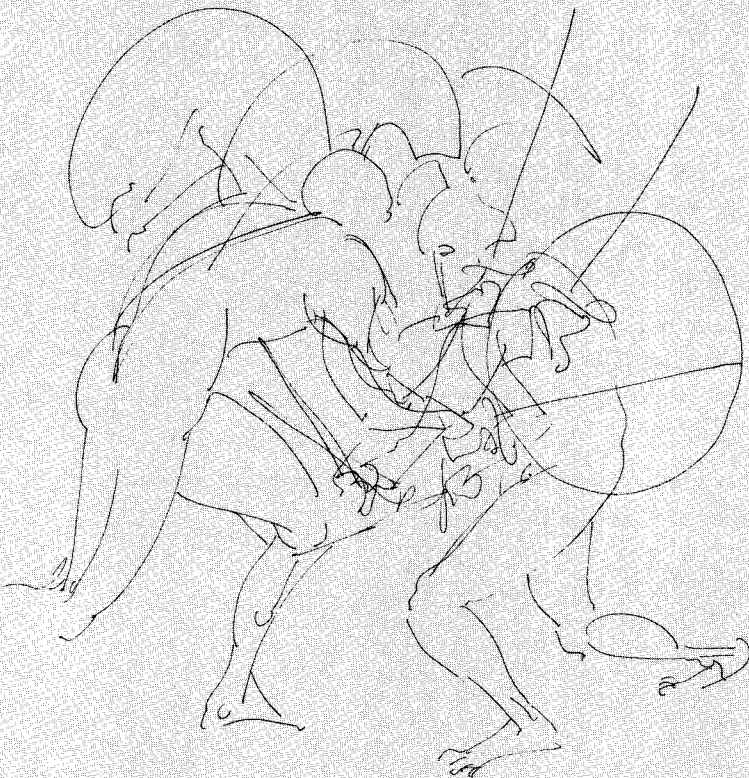
The Trojan squadrons flanked by officers
drew up and sortied, in a din of arms
and shouting voices—wave on wave, like cranes
in clamorous lines before the face of heaven,
bearing away from winter's gloom and storms,
over the streams of Ocean, hoarsely calling,
to bring a slaughter on the Pygmy warriors—
cranes at dawn descending, beaked in cruel attack.
The Akhaians for their part came on in silence,
raging under their breath, shoulder to shoulder sworn.

Imagine mist the southwind rolls on hills,
a blowing bane for shepherds, but for thieves
better than nightfall—mist where a man can see
a stone's throw and no more: so dense the dust
that clouded up from these advancing hosts
as they devoured the plain.

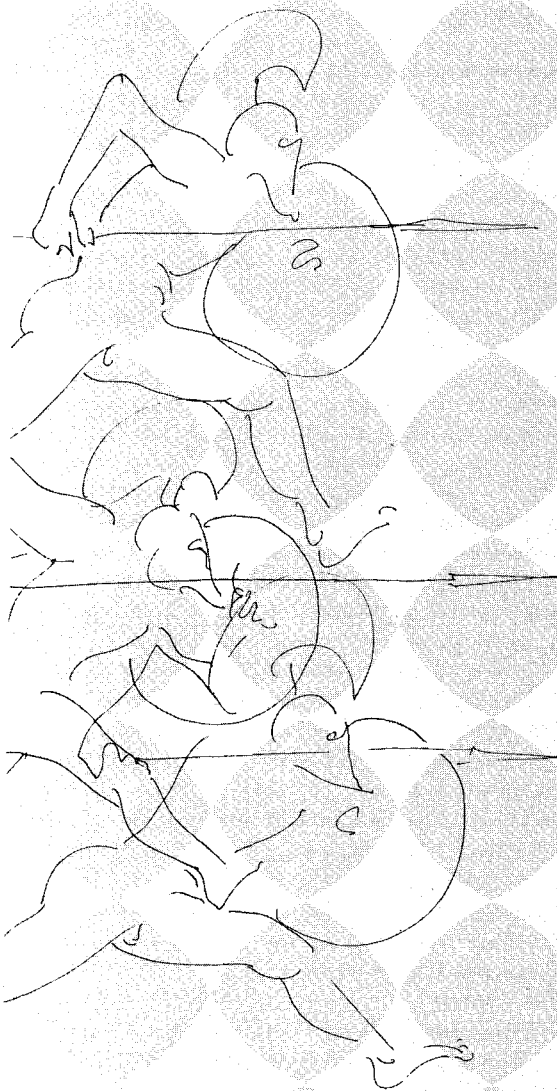
And near and nearer
the front ranks came, till one from the Trojan front
detached himself to be the first in battle—
vivid and beautiful, Aléxandros,
wearing a cowl of leopard skin, a bow
hung on his back, a longsword at his hip,
with two spears capped in pointed bronze. He shook them
and called out to the best men of the Argives
to meet him in the mêlée face to face.

Meneláos, watching that figure come
with long strides in the clear before the others
knew him and thrilled with joy. A hungry lion
that falls on heavy game—an antlered deer
or a wild goat—will rend and feast upon it
even though hunters and their hounds assail him.
So Meneláos thrilled when he beheld
Aléxandros before his eyes; he thought,
I'll cut him to bits, adulterous dog!

—and vaulted
down from his car at once with all his gear.



A TERROR
Book XVIII
Lines 202-231



Iris left him, running downwind. Akhilleus, whom Zeus loved, now rose. Around his shoulders Athêna hung her shield, like a thunderhead with trailing fringe. Goddess of goddesses, she bound his head with golden cloud, and made his very body blaze with fiery light. Imagine how the pyre of a burning town will tower to heaven and be seen for miles from the island under attack, while all day long outside their town, in brutal combat, pikemen suffer the wargod's winnowing; at sundown flare on flare is lit, the signal fires shoot up for other islanders to see, that some relieving force in ships may come: just so that baleful radiance from Akhilleus lit the sky. Moving from parapet to moat, without a nod for the Akhaians, keeping clear, in deference to his mother, he halted and gave tongue. Not far from him Athêna shrieked. The great sound shocked the Trojans into tumult, as a trumpet blown by a savage foe shocks an encircled town: so harsh and clarion was Akhilleus' cry. The hearts of men quailed, hearing that brazen voice. Teams, foreknowing danger, turned their cars, and charioteers blanched, seeing unearthly fire kindled by the grey-eyed goddess Athêna brilliant over Akhilleus. Three great cries he gave above the moat; three times they shuddered, whirling backward, Trojans and allies, and twelve good men took mortal hurt from cars and weapons in the rank behind.

THE NERVE-GAS CONTROVERSY

The Army's push for a new
chemical weapons system

by John F. Henahan

Binary weapons are a "quantum jump in safety," says the Army. They are a quantum jump in the danger of a boom in do-it-yourself chemical weapons, say the Army's critics.

"I do not intend to debate the morality of chemical warfare, or of any other form of warfare. Rather, I would speak to you on the avoidance of war."

The speaker was William E. Dismore, a wiry young man with close-cropped hair and the easygoing charm and confidence of an astronaut. Although he was dressed in unassuming civilian garb, Dismore is a colonel in the U.S. Army Chemical Corps. His audience was a collection of chemists and chemical engineers gathered in the Los Angeles Convention Center for the 167th National Meeting of the American Chemical Society.

The colonel was there to assure the chemists that regardless of morality, there is a real need to maintain a large stockpile of chemical-warfare agents as a deterrent or perhaps for retaliatory use against chemical attack from Russia. On the other hand, Colonel Dismore said, the old stockpile of nerve gases and other chemical-warfare agents is beginning to deteriorate. It is becoming increasingly difficult to store and transport these agents

safely, some of which are so powerful that a single drop can consign an average human being to a very quick and unpleasant death. Because of the inadequacies of the old stockpile, it must be destroyed, the colonel insisted, and to take its place, a new, modernized stockpile of what are known as "binary agents" must be created.

As now conceived, each binary weapon, whether contained in an artillery shell, missile warhead, or some other delivery device, would consist of two "relatively nontoxic" components which would combine to form a lethal nerve gas only as the projectile was on its way to the target. Until then, the two components would remain separated, and pose no toxic threat to life while in storage or during shipment from one location to another.

Dismore's address last March was more evidence of the Army's current campaign to convince the American people and the Congress that they should invest in the binary-weapons system. Although the initial down payment would be only \$5.8 million, the Army has not yet brought itself around to admitting in public that the ultimate cost of destroying the old stockpile and replacing it with binaries could be as much as \$2 billion, as some outside experts estimate.

To the public, the Army stresses that the binary system, if given the go-ahead, would represent a "quantum jump in safety" over our present stockpile of 50 million pounds of nerve-gas agents. The binaries would help the Army solve a major public

relations problem that threatened to scuttle the entire chemical-warfare program in the late sixties. At the time, the public had begun to wonder whether the Army's chemical weapons might be as big a threat to their own lives as they were to the enemy's. In short succession a nerve-gas test accidentally killed 64,000 sheep in Utah, a series of nerve-gas leaks broke out in various storage depots, and the Army floated a plan, since abandoned, to ship 27,000 tons of chemical munitions across the country for burial at sea. The Army seems to feel that the binary system's safety features will make the hazards of the past less likely and at the same time lower the level of revulsion that the idea of chemical weapons arouses in most people.

Safe as they might be in storage, the two components of a binary weapon in combination form one of two types of lethal nerve-gas agents, code-named GB and VX respectively. Chemically, both are organophosphates, deadly offshoots of what began as an innocent search for improved insecticides in Germany in the thirties. GB is a colorless, odorless liquid that evaporates at room temperature. When inhaled, ten one thousandths of a gram in a cubic meter of air can kill an average adult in less than a minute. The VX agents have the added military advantage of being able to persist in the atmosphere for days and to kill by absorption through the skin as well as by inhalation. Both agents kill quickly but messily. By blocking the action of an enzyme which controls the transmission of electrical impulses from one nerve cell to another, the nerve gas paralyzes the muscles that control breathing, defecation, urination, and other body processes.

The binaries might be dressed up as a new look in chemical weaponry for the man in the street, but the program is hardly a surprise to Congress. More than \$11 million for research and development of the binary munitions has been appropriated since 1968, but that is not the crucial expenditure. This year, the Army is asking for \$5.8 million for procurement—that is, funds for setting up a production line for binary weapons at Pine Bluff Arsenal in Arkansas. According to the Army plan, one binary component, an organophosphate called DF, will be loaded into 155-millimeter artillery shells. The other component is an alcohol, and it will be produced by the chemical industry and stored in separate canisters.

Before that initial procurement can be made, it must go the congressional rounds: through the House, and then to the Senate, where action on the binary-weapon program is expected in late summer.

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Senator Edward Kennedy (Democrat, Massachusetts) has said that at that time he will fight strongly to block the procurement. Should the binary program be stopped at some stage of this year's congressional action on it, the Department of Defense can be expected to try again next year, and the Army's research and development on binary weapons will continue as in the past.

In any event, if past experience with escalating defense budgets means anything, a small initial procurement now or in the future will encourage the Defense Department to believe that it has been authorized to follow the program through to its \$2 billion conclusion. "Little budgets almost invariably turn into big budgets," observes Representative Wayne Owens (Democrat, Utah), one of the strongest congressional critics of the binary program.

As details of the DOD plans were revealed before congressional hearings in May, what troubled Representative Owens and other informed critics of the binary program was the military's uncanny sense of timing. By broaching the idea at this time, the Defense Department seems to be making a calculated end run around negotiations on international chemical-weapons disarmament under way in Geneva. For the first time in five years, the twenty-six nations meeting there appear to be close to breaking a deadlock over on-site verification that has kept Russia and the United States on opposite sides of the question until now.

"A decision to go ahead with binaries at this time could almost certainly mean an end to disarmament negotiations, and with them, the prospect for improving U.S. security to a far greater extent than binaries ever could," Dr. Julian Perry Robinson told the same ACS meeting that Colonel Dismore addressed in March. The thirty-three-year-old Englishman from the University of Sussex probably knows more about chemical-warfare weapons—from their production to their international security implications—than anyone else inside or outside the walls of the Pentagon. Within the last few months, his careful, low-key attack on the folly of chemical weapons in general and binary weapons in particular has been heard at the Pugwash Conference in Helsinki in April, the ACS meeting, and the two congressional hearings in May.

Noting that the American delegation to the Geneva Conference of the Convention on Disarmament (CCD) has yet to make a counterproposal for an end to the production and storage of chemical weapons that the Russians put forward in 1972, Robinson, a former chemist, remarks:

"The United States, rightly or wrongly, is not credited by its CCD colleagues with a constructive attitude toward the negotiations. If it were now to embark on a billion-dollar acquisitions program [the other billion would go for destruction of the

old stockpile], what confidence could remain in U.S. good intentions?"

In addition to its impact on the CCD negotiations, the binary-weapons issue could cloud chances that the Senate will finally get around to ratifying the Geneva protocol of 1925, an international agreement outlawing the first use of chemical and biological weapons as weapons of war. Although the protocol has been ratified by more than fifty countries, including the USSR, the United States has still to ratify, even though President Nixon recommended that the Senate do so in 1970. The chief stumbling block is the Administration's contention, contrary to the UN position of all but a few countries (England, Australia, and Portugal), that the protocol does not apply to tear gases and herbicides, both of which were used on a grand scale in Vietnam. Senate liberals want a reversal of that contention, rather than a protocol with gaping holes in it. Although the binary program does not relate directly to the protocol, the emergence of this new "safer" chemical-weapons system could dilute some of the horror of chemical weapons that would normally prompt the Senate to vote for ratification.

By now the Army's justification for the binaries has become familiar to congressional ears, and that justification has little to do with its impact on disarmament negotiations. Rather, the Army stresses the safety factor, and the use of binary weapons in a tit-for-tat encounter with the Russians, probably on a European battlefield. In defending the impending binary stockpile, the Army must in the same breath justify the *raison d'être* for the old stockpile, an assignment that was most recently handled by Amos A. Jordan, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs.

Reinforced by three generals, three colonels, and seven military aides, Jordan told the Foreign Affairs subcommittee in May that if the Russians attacked our side with chemical weapons and if we were not able to retaliate in kind, they would have a "significant tactical advantage." This would hold true even if our forces had protected themselves against attack with the gear required for defense against nerve-gas agents. If, on the other hand, we could retaliate with our own nerve-gas barrage, we would put the Russians in the same uncomfortable position, forcing them to waddle around in their own rubber suits and gas masks, decreasing their mobility, restricting their use of the terrain, and otherwise blunting the force of their attack. Stalemate. (Critics, including Julian Perry Robinson, dispute this point, observing that Soviet tanks and other military vehicles are already equipped with filters for nerve gas and other chemical agents and could roam through a chemical-saturated battle-

field pretty much at will.) Finally, said Mr. Jordan, the chemical option might reduce the likelihood that we would have to cross the nuclear threshold to an even more devastating kind of warfare. Albeit not completely. In Pentagonese, the argument goes like this:

A capability to respond in kind with chemical weapons would not necessarily rule out an ultimate need to move to tactical nuclear weapons but would provide a non-nuclear option to redress an adverse military situation created by enemy use of chemical weapons in conventional warfare. Therefore, any determination to use nuclear weapons could be made on the basis of its own merits in light of the overall conflict situation.

Stripped of the jargon, the statement seems to mean that we wouldn't plan to use the nuclear weapons in response to a chemical attack, but then again, if the going got sufficiently rough, we might decide to do so after all.

On the anti-binary side, one of the most persuasive, and in a historical perspective, most incongruous, witnesses before the Foreign Affairs subcommittee was Dr. Charles Price, speaking in behalf of the American Chemical Society, a scientific organization made up of more than 100,000 professional chemists and chemical engineers from academia and industry. Until recently, the ACS was among the strongest partisans for chemical weapons and in the twenties was part of the lobbying movement (along with veterans' organizations and the chemical industry) that was responsible for this country's failure to ratify the protocol then. Since 1970, however, it has become obvious to the Army Chemical Corps that a gradual greening in the ranks of the ACS has stripped the Army of one of its most enamored allies. Not only has the Society called for ratification of the protocol *without* the tear-gas-herbicide disclaimer, but there, standing before the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on a warm May day in Washington, was the ruggedly handsome ACS spokesman, casting aspersions on the whole concept of chemical weaponry with nary a kind word for the proposed binary system.

Times have changed, said Price, a University of Pennsylvania chemist. In World War I, the prime victim of a chemical attack using the gases and primitive delivery systems of the day was the soldier in the trench. But now that an attack with nerve gases mounted in modern artillery shells, or in modern missile warheads, can cover thousands of acres with some of the most lethal concoctions ever devised by man, argues Price, "they could exact a great toll among civilians as well as the military. In fact, since substantial measures of protection and advanced training are usually available to the military, the most likely victims of chemical warfare will be civilians. Chemical-warfare agents have become weapons of indiscriminate destruc-

tion, and in our view, every step toward their nonuse and eventual elimination should be encouraged."

Arguing that production of binary weapons should be postponed at this time, Price suggested that the safety factor was far outweighed by the possibility that initiation of the program could easily "serve as a moral sanction for other nations to do likewise, and so tend to encourage proliferation of these weapons."

"A greater concern of the American Chemical Society is that the more such know-how is developed, especially in an open society like that of the United States, the more readily the technology can be disseminated to less developed nations. Furthermore, the simplicity and accessibility of the components of the binary agents make this weapon potentially available to terrorists." And this indeed is the most frightening aspect of the binary-weapons debate. The hazards and costs of building and storing conventional chemical weapons are great enough to deter small countries, not to mention urban guerrillas, from getting into the binary business. The same "quantum jump in safety" our Army emphasizes in making the case for binaries, together with the ease of production of which Price speaks, amounts to an invitation to an appalling proliferation of the weapon.

Dr. Robinson agrees with Price, adding that because most small countries have the means for manufacturing binary nerve-gas weapons, their use by these nations in a small-scale foray could quickly mushroom into an international calamity.

"Suppose, for example, that a client government of the United States decided to acquire nerve gas and then used it to escalate a local conflict. There is very little anti-gas protection available outside Europe, and under such circumstances, the consequences of nerve-gas employment could be mass destruction on a large scale. How conceivable is it that a direct superpower confrontation could not be avoided? Or look at it another way. What if a client government of the Soviet Union did this? Could the resultant pressures for direct U.S. intervention be resisted? One need look no further than the Middle East to envisage the enormous dangers to world peace of proliferation."

And what would Russia's reaction to this country's decision to create a new chemical-weapons system be, other critics ask. Would the USSR have any real inclination to destroy its own chemical stockpile, as proposed in Geneva, while the United States is embarking on its accelerated nerve-gas production scheme? Would this not be considered a provocation, especially when the new weapons begin to move into Germany as replacements for the old system? Or, is there any way to determine if it is our nerve-gas stockpile that induced Russia to create a stockpile that some experts say is more powerful than our own, while building up its de-

fenses against chemical weapons in both the civilian and military sectors? If it did, would Russia not be forced for its own national security reasons to continue what might appear to them to be a new cycle in the chemical arms race?

Convincing answers to such questions have not been forthcoming from Administration spokesmen in the past, and they were no more evident at the congressional hearings in May. Leon Sloss, deputy director for Politico-Military Affairs of the State Department, allotted 122 words in his oral statement to the subject of binaries. All aspects of the issue, including the impact on further arms-control agreements, will be "under study" over the next several months, after which the Administration will make its own decision on whether or not the program is necessary and worthwhile, Mr. Sloss said.

If his remarks seemed bland to the members of the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee, the comments of Dr. Fred Ikle, director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, were downright frustrating. The ACDA serves as technical backup for ongoing deliberations in the field of international disarmament. In earlier statements, Ikle has candidly stated that the binary program could be disruptive to the American negotiating position at the CCD in Geneva. This time there was little trace of that conviction in Ikle's three-page statement, and it was only under sharp questioning from Representative Edward Biester (Republican, Pennsylvania) that he would admit that the binaries might indeed prove to be a problem in Geneva. "DOD was very uptight about his earlier statements and must have gone downtown and bitched about it," said a discouraged staff member of the House subcommittee. "We practically had to rape him to get any kind of meaningful testimony out of him."

Putting all the other arguments for or against binary weapons aside, what rankles a legislator like Representative Owens is the fact that Congress is being asked to put its imprimatur on a weapons system that has never really been tested where it will ultimately be used—in the atmosphere. Representative Owens, whose concern over the direction that U.S. chemical-weapons policy is taking, goes back to that sheep kill in his home state in March, 1968, an event responsible in large part for inducing Congress to make its most recent appraisals of the whole issue, including the binaries. It is, in fact, the Utah disaster that has made the Army cautious about testing the binaries in the open air. Following the public outcry that accompanied that disaster, the law now demands that atmospheric tests of nerve-gas agents can be carried out only after the Army files an environmental impact statement and receives authorization from the Secretary

of Health, Education, and Welfare. Meanwhile, the Chemical Corps has been relying on nonlethal mock nerve-gas weapons to evaluate how the lethal materials perform under battlefield conditions. Even the binary critics admit that simulation testing is far from ideal. Nerve gases have their own peculiar chemical characteristics and are uniquely subject to the vagaries of wind, rain, and other meteorological conditions. For the time being then, it appears that the binaries are safe enough to store but not safe enough to test in the atmosphere.

Nevertheless, the military certainly realizes that Congress will not continue to fund the development of any costly new weapons system until it can be claimed that it has been adequately tested. The suspicion that the open-air testing of binaries is in the cards is implicit in a recent letter to Representative Owens from General Creighton W. Abrams, U.S. Army Chief of Staff. The results of simulation testing are still under study, the general wrote last March, and it may be "necessary for us to recommend to the Secretary of Defense that carefully controlled, limited, open-air tests of toxic agents be undertaken to verify the effectiveness of the ammunition before making any decision regarding production."

With all the unanswered questions about atmospheric testing, strategic need, proliferation, and ultimate cost of the proposed binary program, Representative Owens contends that there is no pressing need to rush ahead with it at this time. If we really believe in the need for a military deterrent, we already have, in addition to conventional forces, our nuclear weapons and our present stockpile of chemical weapons. As he told the chemists in Los Angeles:

"Obviously we cannot discard all of our deterrent capability; the climate of today's world is not that amicable yet. It seems to me that we are strong enough militarily to make the first real gesture towards chemical weapons arms control by delaying the adoption of the binary chemical system and devoting the talents of our best and most highly placed policy-makers to our negotiations, on both chemical weapons and nuclear arms control. We do not jeopardize the status quo of current CW capabilities by delaying the binary chemical munitions because it is the same nerve-gas agent which we currently have in our own stockpile. We do not give away any technological edge by delaying further engineering and testing of the binary; we have been working on the system for the last twenty years. We may not only encourage arms control but also discourage other nations from embarking on their own production of CW weapons if we, as world leaders, indicate our willingness to take more time to discuss this issue before committing our resources to further chemical weapons construction." □

SKIMPY DAY AT THE SOLSTICE

The whiskey colored sun
cruises low as a marshhawk
over the dun grass.
Long intricate shadows
bar the path
through the pitchpines.

Then empty intense winter sky.
Dark crouches against the walls of buildings.
The ground sinks under its weight.
Pale flat lemon sky,
the trees all hooks scratching it.

If I could soar I could
prolong daylight on my face.
I could float on the stark
wooden light, levitating
like dried milkweed silk.

Only December and already
my bones beg for sun.
Storms have gnawed the beach
to the cliffs' base.
Oaks in the salty blast
clutch their ragged brown
leaves like a derelict's
paperbag of sad possessions.

Like the gulls that cross from sea to bay
at sunset screaming, I am hungry.
Among sodden leaves and hay colored needles
I scavenge for the eye's least
nibble of green.

by Marge Piercy

THE WAGES OF INFLATION

by Roger G. Kennedy

It has to be said: a large chunk of the savings of many Americans has been taxed away while they weren't looking, and it isn't coming back. Taxing savings through inflation has, in effect, become a part of our public policy, and without much discussion. The consequences of this kind of taxation are severe; among them, if the process continues far enough, will be the balance and vitality of our society.

Everybody knows that prices are higher, and that individual savings have lost value, but not everybody has been watching while, since the early 1960s, this country has suffered a serious erosion of the vigor of its independent institutions. This has happened not because of any seditious conspiracy, but from the unadmitted addition of taxation upon savings to taxation upon earnings.

During the 1960s the Johnson Administration chose to try to fund a war in Southeast Asia along with huge domestic programs without taxing earnings or income enough to pay for them both. President Johnson feared that his Great

Society programs would be lost if they were put in pawn to higher taxes, and he believed that the Vietnam War would soon end—and that with its conclusion, its drain upon tax revenues would end too.

The government printed money to pay its debt; the economy continued to overheat, and inflation increased. Inflation became a "tax" levied upon those who saved. This was the first stage of the capital levy. It struck all savers: for instance, pension funds which owned bonds to secure their obligation to tend the needs of the old, or colleges which owned bonds to meet the educational needs of the young, found the value of those bonds cut in half in less than a decade.

Then, despite much rhetoric to the contrary, the next Administration, and a Congress insensitive to, or incapable of, dealing with inflation, administered more of the same mode of surreptitious taxation. Once again it fell directly upon savings while squeezing income. Since 1970, the Nixon Administration and the Congress have forced another capital levy. This time, continued

inflation has "paid" for budget deficits not only to sustain vast defense expenditures and domestic programs but also, in part, to redress an imbalance of payments. Inflation rates were at peacetime highs well before the oil crisis—or even before crop failures.

Then came dollar devaluations—two of them—and in their wake, American buyers paid higher prices for foreign goods. The dependence of the American economy upon costly imports, oil the most conspicuous among them, has grown, so a result of dollar devaluation was the relative increase in the cost of foreign products.

Damage

Neither the Administration nor the Congress had adequately weighed the cost of taxing savings as distinguished from the kinds of income taxes we have become used to.

While everybody paid part of the bill for continuing deficits, we are just beginning to recognize how much was paid by the endowed in-

stitutions of the country. First, like all of us, they were hurt by rising costs. If they were bond investors in the early 1960s, by 1968 they had paid the first stage of the capital levy. Next, after 1968, many switched from bonds to stocks, and they were struck again: national economic policy laid a second stage of the capital levy upon those whose savings were in stocks. The price of the average stock on the New York Stock Exchange is less than half what it was in 1968. Was inflation the only cause of this loss of capital? Not entirely, but it is hard to see how stock prices could stay high and still face the competition from bonds which had become, in 1968, relatively "cheap." Inflation, growing in virulence, not only had forced bonds yields to levels which were fiercely competitive with stocks, but also had shaken that confidence in the economy which is the necessary condition to buying a share of stock.

A small college, for example, which had its \$20 million endowment in long-term corporate bonds in 1960 had lost \$10 million in market value by 1970. Bonds bought in 1960 yielded 4 percent annually; over the decade inflation pushed interest rates up to more than 8 percent, so nobody would purchase the old bonds in 1970 at more than half their old price. The trustees of such a college, watching their assets decline, and hearing tales of triumph in the great speculative stock market of the late 1960s, might well have moved half or more of the remaining endowment into stocks. If they did so in 1968, and since that time have fared no better than a fund which had a dollar invested in every stock on the New York Stock Exchange, they would have lost half the money they put into stocks. That would be another \$2.5 million. They would now have an endowment worth about a third of what they had in 1960. Meanwhile, their

operating costs have increased at the rate of about 7 percent a year (this is close to the average for educational institutions).

Pensioners cannot compute the damage so readily as college trustees, but it is there. Young people seeking education in institutions which are caught in the squeeze between falling endowments and rising prices can feel the damage. The old and the young, therefore, will suffer. Museums and hospitals and libraries will cut services. These institutions can do their jobs less well because much of their capital has been taxed away. It has gone to support action for which recent governments have been unwilling to levy additional income taxes. Taxing current income is politically unpleasant; taxing savings is not felt so fast.

The taxman cometh by night

There is no need here to debate the importance of the programs which have been funded by these capital levies. I, for one, think we have had ample resources to pay for what we wanted. The issue is one of candor. If government comes in the night to take away our savings, we can at least insist that it come by day.

It is not right to remain silent when so much that has been painfully built, so much that is precious to our tradition and our present values, is being eroded by a continuing, unadmitted capital levy. Our independent institutions are being taxed away, slowly it is true, but surely. Does it matter? I think it does.

The strongest argument for independent institutions is that they provide sanctuary, support, and stimulus to independent persons. Some solecists are alone, some saints chose to stand alone, but most men need a community to form a horizontal dimension in their lives. We require the sustenance of ideas shared with contemporaries. We don't need universal agreement, just enough of it to reassure us that we are not insane.

Endowed institutions help provide

community. But even in the company of the like-minded, there is a sort of temporal loneliness; though we may have the agreement of contemporaries, most of us require some solace of tradition. Each of us can serve better our special truth if we find a few others enough like us to be relevant, and better still, if we can locate ourselves in time through discovering that we stand in some continuity. Churches, colleges, libraries provide continuity, and their savings—endowments—provide for continuity.

A community of shared values within diversity and a continuity of values over time sustain vigorous individuals and a heterogeneous society.

Without institutions to provide community and continuity few men could stand alone against bullying despots or bullying crowds. Institutions can harbor ideas which, if left unsheltered, would be lost in the crush and dust. Though our Bill of Rights, for example, does provide protection against the tempests of mass opinion, and against knavery in office, it presupposes that the law does not exist in isolation. It assumes the existence of institutions in society serving the same purposes. Furthermore, it assumes, because its framers lived in a context of endowed institutions, that savings will flow into the maintenance of such sanctuaries.

These sanctuaries do not protect themselves. They are very easily lost. Liberty, expressing itself through diverse institutions, dies unless it is in the interest of powerful groups to maintain it. In the eighteenth century its death was feared most from despotism, a blunt instrument. In the twentieth century, in this country, inflation is a more subtle but a deadly peril. Inflation takes money from individuals who save, of course; it also alters the balance between the government and independent institutions. It transfers money from the latter to the former, and with money goes the power to make a fact out of an opinion. That is a perilous transfer, and it is being made every day by taxation through inflation. □

Roger G. Kennedy is a vice president of the Ford Foundation. This article, of course, represents his personal views, not necessarily those of the Foundation or its trustees.

THE FOLLY OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE

by Peter Blake

Nine outrageous questions posed by an architect who says, "I have seen the future, and it doesn't work."

There exists a great temptation, in the life of an artist or scientist or any other kind of professional, to commit oneself to a dogma in one's youth, and then to build one's entire work on that dogmatic foundation. The temptation is all the greater when the dogma is radical, exciting, revolutionary. For one thing, you are likely to believe, forever (or, at least, for one lifetime), that the dogma won't be refuted until well after you are dead—and so you won't have to re-examine your premises; the historians will do it for you.

For another, subscribing in youth to an initially radical dogma is likely to make you feel young and daring even after you have, in fact, become middle-aged and timid. Because the premises upon which you have built your life's work used to be revolutionary, you remain a radical all your life, you lucky dog!—just so long as your premises don't begin to wobble.

A perfect illustration of what I am talking about is the life and work of a typical modern architect, born in the 1920s, educated in the 1940s and 1950s, and successful and radically chic in the 1970s.

It so happens that I am that typical, modern architect; and that most of my closest friends in this country and abroad are almost exactly like me—though many of them are, admittedly, more successful as designers and builders of remarkable structures.

All of us fit into the timetable sketched out above; all of us received our dogma from Mies van der Rohe, from Le Corbusier, from Gropius, from Breuer, and some even from Frank Lloyd Wright. All of us have built our lives and work on



the dogma handed down by these masters, and handed down to them, in turn and earlier, by Louis Sullivan and Peter Behrens and Auguste Perret. We are the Third and Fourth Generation modernists, and we would be totally lost if, all of a sudden, the dogma handed down to us should prove to be fallacious.

So we continue to operate (quite successfully, and quite blithely) as if form must naturally follow function, and as if structure must forever be the ethic of architecture. We know all the slogans, and we are pretty good at persuading the rest of the world to believe in them. It's terrific, so long as we don't weaken.

Well, like all of my dearest and closest friends in my profession and theirs, I want to remain radically chic for at least another thirty years, when I plan to drop dead. Unhappily for me—and for some of my friends—this is becoming increasingly difficult: for I (and others) have begun to discover that almost nothing that we were taught by our betters in or out of the architecture schools of the midcentury has stood the test of time.

Nothing—or almost nothing—turns out to have been entirely true. The premises upon which we have almost literally built our world are crumbling, and our superstructure is crumbling with them.

It is quite a blow. And yet there are some redeeming features. When I first began to suspect, about a dozen years ago, after reading Jane Jacobs' first book, that my generation of architects had been brought up on what a charming French friend of mine calls "boulle chitte," I decided that it was time to re-examine things quite ruthlessly. I decided that—just for the hell of it—I would assume for a moment that *everything* I had been taught was false; that the exact opposite was, in fact, true. Did form follow function, or function follow form? Were cities the sine qua non of civilization, or had they been rendered obsolete by electronics? Was the earth really flat?

At first, these questions, privately posed and privately answered, were really disturbing. But after a while the entire exercise became an exhilarating, a liberating experience. The world—at least my own small corner of it, the world of architecture—became a marvelous place: full of irreverent challenges, full of startling revelations. All of a sudden, everything was fresh and new and terrific; I found myself back at school again, with myself as my severest critic.

And so I decided to accept absolutely nothing about modern architecture as gospel truth. I decided to start once again—as the architects of the Chicago School once did—at Point Zero.

Peter Blake, architect, author, editor,
is at work on a book about modern architecture.

Let me begin with some fairly simplistic notions or assumptions, and then move on to something just a little more challenging. I would like to do this the way they do it on some of those TV quiz shows around lunchtime, where they postulate a statement—in this case, a statement that has been drilled into every modern architect over the past half-century—and then ask you to say whether the statement is "true or false."

1: "Structure is the ethic of architecture." True or false?

FALSE. Most buildings today are shaped much more significantly by plumbing, wiring, heating, and air conditioning than by their "skins and bones," as Mies van der Rohe put it. Far more space (and far more work and money) goes into plumbing, wiring, heating, and air conditioning than into "skins and bones." Moreover, every time an architect has tried to express the structure of his building and separate it out from the skin and from the services inside, the resulting millions of feet of complicated facade joints have caused more problems, in terms of waterproofing, heat- and cold-proofing, and cracked glass, than any one single other factor. "Expressing structure" is driving builders mad, driving clients into bankruptcy, and driving architects into premature graves.

2: "Glass skins draped over steel or concrete frames are the most rational, and most ephemeral, visions of the twentieth century." True or false?

FALSE. The most ephemeral, yes; the most rational, no. Every modern architect (present company included) loves the many inimitable qualities of glass. But every modern architect has also been in trouble because of this particular love affair: a lot of glass has problems of expansion and contraction; a lot of it cracks under unpredictable wind loads; a lot of it lets in too much heat or too much cold; a lot of it creates so much glare that it takes a great deal of interior, artificial, and expensive backlighting to balance the natural light admitted from the great outdoors.

Glass-skinned buildings are made inhabitable if you make the skin double-glazed, or reflectively glazed, or reflectively *double* glazed—or if you add acres of metal or concrete sunshades (some of them adjustable) *outside* the ephemeral skin of glass. And if you happen to live in a climatic zone visited by freezing temperatures as well as broiling heat, you will then need to attach heating devices to those adjustable metal or concrete sunshades to

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melt any icicles that would, otherwise, drop to the sidewalk, thus puncturing the skulls of innocent passersby.

In other words, in the real world, rather than the world of architectural theory, all-glass buildings leave something to be desired. And not only something to be desired by those who live and work inside the glass skins, but also by those who live across the street. Some of our recent, reflective glass buildings have been so effectively reflective that they have broiled their immediate neighbors, whose air-conditioning requirements were suddenly doubled when the new arrival started reflecting heat in their general direction.

So much for skin and bones. The "importance in a glass tower," Mies van der Rohe once said, "is in the play of reflections." Mies was a very logical man, and he understood that "the play of reflections" in an all-glass building is important not to the person living inside the building, but to the person living opposite it, across the street. And when Mies completed his justly famous all-glass-and-steel apartment towers at 860 Lakeshore Drive in Chicago, he somehow never got around to moving into his own apartment inside one of those towers, and continued until his death to live at his old-fashioned apartment, roughly across the street from 860 Lakeshore Drive. Being a contemplative man, Mies van der Rohe also liked to watch "the play of reflections" in his glass towers—from across the street.

3: "The best way to bring life and happiness into a modern city is to construct it of tall towers, raised off the ground on columns (or pilotis), so as to permit pedestrians to circulate freely at ground level, through wide-open spaces, parks, playgrounds, and so on." True or false?

FALSE. What the ground floors of cities need is not wide-open spaces, but tightly structured spaces full of shops, restaurants, theaters, markets, and all the rest. The one sure way to kill cities is to turn their ground floors into great, spacious expanses of nothing.) Jane Jacobs was one of the first people to point this out, almost fifteen years ago, but cities are still being built of glassy towers on pilotis, with nothing at ground-floor level except windswept plazas and terrible sculpture and sometimes a fountain or a bank that closes at 3 P.M. (Such diagrams for modern cities are sure death for their inhabitants—and that is not a rhetorical statement: Sixth Avenue, in New York, whose upper reaches consist almost entirely of glass towers on pilotis, with lots of empty space at ground level, is one of the most dangerous *modern* avenues in Manhattan.) I know—I live around the corner from it. (And before those pristine diagrams were constructed, the

avenue was full of little shops and restaurants and bars and movie houses that stayed open most of the night—and nobody was stabbed. Now the place is an architectural gem, more or less—and a human disaster area.

4: "Towers in a park are the best solution for families living in urban areas, because open space will be available in the great parks created by building vertically rather than horizontally." True or false?

FALSE. Experience with urban housing in the United States over the past thirty or forty years has shown that high-rise apartments for families with children, however well conceived, tend to be a disaster. Pruitt-Igoe, in St. Louis, is the most dramatic case in point: there, a low-income housing project consisting of three dozen high-rise apartment buildings has been completely abandoned, several of the buildings have been dynamited, and there are plans to raze the rest. There in the middle of a major American city sits a modern ruin commemorating the failure of an eminently well intentioned effort by idealistic architects and planners in the 1950s.

5: "We need large housing developments in our cities, to solve our desperate housing shortages." True or false?

FALSE again. Housing projects have got to be the very worst way of solving our housing problems. I don't want to belabor the obvious, but just think what it means to *live* in a housing project. The social stigma that is attached to it—the fact that everybody knows that your family earns less than \$3759.50 per annum; the stigma attached to your children when they date others outside the "project." Just think of the rigid immobility implied in a housing project, for people (often black or brown) whose most desperate need is housing *mobility*: being able to live near better job opportunities, better cultural and educational opportunities, and possibly outside racial ghettos. In fact, the well-meaning people who design and build subsidized housing are, knowingly or not, the perpetrators of a status quo in which the poor, and thus, usually, the black and the brown, are segregated and kept effectively from better jobs and better schools, and a better life. Quite clearly, the Nixon Administration's housing program, which wishes to substitute rent supplement (and other) coupons for direct subsidies to local housing agencies, is an enlightened approach. In any event, the ideal (though not the architectural) solution to

our shortage of housing is to subsidize people, not projects. The bureaucrats who build and administer projects are usually so incompetent that those projects cost twice or three times what they would cost if built by private enterprise—which means that we could be getting double or triple the pleasure (in terms of subsidized housing for the poor) out of our hard-earned dollars if we gave those dollars to people who are good at building, rather than bureaucrats who demonstrably are not.

But the real issue is not who builds what, but who lives where. And it is quite clear now that rent and home-purchase supplements to people entitled to them are a much more enlightened way of subsidizing housing, however indirectly, than the idealistic methods of the past.

6: “More sophisticated transportation systems will make our cities work.” True or false?

FALSE. The solution to cities like Los Angeles and its problems is not to design and build better and more efficient mass-transit systems; it is, really, to design and build more vital concentrations of people *that will make transportation systems unnecessary*. Transportation hardware (cars, buses, monorails, subways) is not the technology that will fix all our urban problems; it is the support we need when our cities are in trouble. In fact, it is fair to say that the ideal city needs no transportation systems at all, other than the built-in transportation system that every citizen carries with him or her, in his or her feet. The ideal city is a place of crowds and confrontations, not of highways that are symbols of alienation. The ideal city is a place so jammed with people and events that the only successful criminals are pickpockets, and the only transportation problem is the width of the city’s sidewalks.

Let me go on. Nobody believes anymore that “Form Follows Function,” for the simple and obvious reason that the functions of our buildings have become so hopelessly unpredictable that no form, however universal, can be devised to accommodate them all, or even some of them. So that one is out, too. Nobody believes anymore that Teamwork is the route to Great Architecture—not since the late Walter Gropius, who was pretty hot on the subject, demonstrated that his own team was not really all that great at producing great buildings. And I trust that nobody believes anymore that Buckminster Fuller’s domes are the panaceas all of us have been waiting for, because not even that wonderful man, Bucky Fuller, ever really believed such nonsense.

But let me get back to more specific assumptions that have tended to calcify our brains and atrophy our talents.

7: “Modern architecture will make people happier, healthier, sexier, more creative, and so on.” True or false?

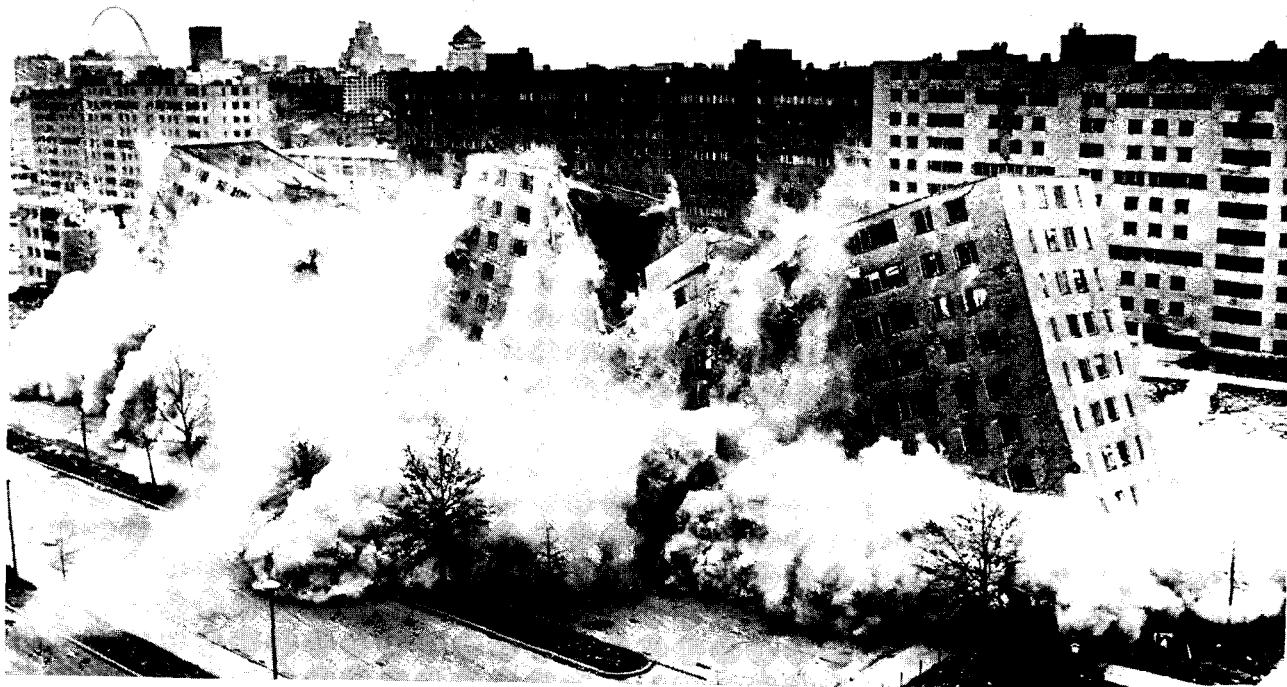
FALSE again. One of the very unsettling discoveries, to most modern architects like myself, is the fact that some of the most successful buildings in use in our century are old ones that were originally designed for some totally different usage and then “recycled” for a completely unrelated occupancy. I am thinking of railroad stations that are much better museums, in their latest incarnation, than most modern museums of recent vintage. I am thinking of libraries that used to be courthouses, and theaters that used to be garages or warehouses or basements or libraries, and office buildings that used to be convents, and apartment buildings that used to be manufacturing lofts. For some reason that ought to depress the hell out of every modern architect, these recycled buildings are, almost invariably, much more exciting, much more stimulating, much more happy-making than the latest models produced by today’s architects using today’s technology. (Has it ever occurred to anyone to ask why most first-rate modern architects the world over live in old, remodeled houses not of their own period or of their own design? I remember going to school at Penn, at the School of Architecture there, in a building that was originally designed to be, I think, the School of Dentistry. I can’t imagine what kind of School of Dentistry it could have been, but it was a very stimulating School of Architecture—much better than Paul Rudolph’s Upstairs at the Downstairs at Yale.

Not long ago, a friend of mine, the French critic Pierre Schneider, said to me that today the most radical position a young, modern architect could take is to refuse to build, to insist that old buildings be re-used until their usefulness had been exhausted. It is a fascinating notion, and very far removed from Le Corbusier’s dictum, in the 1920s, that man’s choice lay between modern architecture and chaos—the end of the world.

8: “Prefabrication will solve most of today’s building problems.” True or false?

FALSE again, or largely so. Obviously, prefabrication is second nature to our building technology, and that won’t change. Nobody in his right

Dynamite brings down one of the eleven-story buildings in St. Louis’ Pruitt-Igoe public housing complex. Only several of Pruitt-Igoe’s buildings have undergone demolition; thirty-odd await it and stand abandoned, “a modern ruin,” as the author calls the complex.



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mind would suggest that we ought to make bathtubs by hand, and on the building site.

But bathtubs may, just possibly, be one of the largest prefabricatable units that we can handle nowadays, because the single most significant and most obvious fact about this country is its enormous size, which means that prefabricated units of *anything* need to be shipped over huge distances to reach a market large enough to make mass production economical at the plant. But shipping a lot of air around the United States is inherently so costly, so uneconomical, that whatever on-site savings in labor may result are often outweighed by enormous shipping costs.

Moreover, prefabrication, for a market that may contain areas ranging from the subarctic to the semitropical in climate, that may be governed by hundreds of different and conflicting building codes, is virtually impossible because economical prefabrication implies standardization, and if your ultimate product needs to be manufactured in dozens of variations to satisfy dozens of different climatic and code conditions, then any savings in cost (and even advantages of dimensional precision) will be lost. The idea of shipping houses all around this country is just plain absurd; and most prefabricators will tell you that the maximum radius of distribution—the maximum *economic* radius—is 150 miles from a prefabbing plant. So you will fail unless you find a location in the center of a 300-mile-diameter circle that contains a market, a demand big enough to keep your plant busy twenty-four hours a day, climatic conditions that permit you to standardize, building codes that permit you to standardize also, highways that permit you to truck extra-wide loads, dealerships and financing tools that will assure a constant demand for your product, and an enlightened unionized labor force within this circle of 70,000 square miles that will kindly consent to place your product on its intended site.

That is quite a tall order, and it hasn't been filled in very many places in this country or anywhere else. But that isn't all: when you talk about the prefabrication of houses—or of residential units, whether they be low-rise suburban ranch houses, or Habitat-type boxes—you are talking about something that may never be worth prefabricating in the first place—or, anyway, not in this century. You are talking about something in which the shell (the thing that most theorists in the prefabrication game love to concentrate on) costs less than 20 percent of the total—and in which the utilities, interior finishes, on-site services, foundations, land and land-preparation, and mortgage money *cost all the rest*. And land and foundations and access roads and trees don't lend themselves to prefabrication—nor do interest rates on building money. So when you get right down to it, the prefabrication of a housing shell, shipped over *x* miles

from plant to site, may save 10 percent of the cost of that shell, or 2 percent of the total cost of the dwelling itself. Or it may not, if only one little thing goes wrong in that intricate process.

That is pretty shattering news. The trouble with most of our prefabrication theories of the past is that they were developed in areas like Europe or Japan, where densities are high, the climate and the codes are relatively uniform, markets are just around the corner, labor is relatively cheap (but materials expensive, so that it pays to prefabricate because it may save you a millimeter in the thickness of a wall), and financing and distribution systems are much easier to fit to your objectives. None of these conditions prevail in the United States, and so none of the solutions based upon European and Japanese theory have really worked here. To anyone as devoted to the precision and the beauty and the logic of standardized building as I am, this is a depressing realization.

About a year ago, an even more depressing event was reported in the *New York Times*. A building in upstate New York had just been completed; it was a very conventional site-built structure of concrete blocks and bricks and all that other antediluvian stuff, and it had gone up in record time and beat all cost estimates. The reason for its success was this: in upstate New York the climate is awful for six months of the year, and terrible for the remainder of the year. And so the builders had rented a great big air-supported bubble, pumped it up over their site, heated the air, and constructed their boring building inside this cocoon. Not a minute of labor lost to bad weather, not an ounce of material lost to frost or snow or rain, not a drop of paint lost because the surfaces were damp and soggy. After the building was completed in that record time, they just deflated the bubble and sent it back to Cleveland, whence it had come—to be rented out to the next intelligent customer.

Now, what this little event signifies to anyone who has ever really built something is that a smart idea like constructing a building inside a giant incubator may be a much more important innovation in U.S. building technology than any kind of universal, modular standard. And then you begin to think of other, nonarchitectural strategies that may have a vastly greater effect on the nature of twentieth-century building than Pier Luigi Nervi ever had: control of land speculation, subsidies to mortgage interest rates, financing systems similar to GM's so-called Acceptance Corporation, an enlightened labor contract—or a big on-site bubble. Any one, or all, of these prosaic innovations probably would do infinitely more to increase our stock of housing and of other enclosed environments than the most sophisticated and the most beautiful systems developed by Nervi and Prouvé and others.

Perhaps we should re-examine *all* our past as-

sumptions on matters relating to architecture and urban design, and assume that we and our teachers have been dead wrong, that the answers we are looking for may be found in entirely unexpected places and disciplines.

9: “Cities are essential if civilization is to survive.” True or false?

I suspect that this one might prove to be false also. It is quite true that the kind of face-to-face confrontation that has been possible only in densely crowded cities in the past is what generated ideas, and that without such “interface” it is possible that there might have been no arts, no science, no philosophy, no literature, no political democracy. All this is quite true for our past, including our recent past—but is it still true, and will it be true tomorrow?

Obviously, the kinds of electronic communications systems in universal use throughout the developed countries have begun to make many face-to-face communications unnecessary. Any day now, it is going to become evident, even to those who run our banks and our insurance companies, that they are wasting an awful lot of money by building huge corporate headquarters, on expensive downtown real estate, and then filling up these headquarters with file cabinets—if all they really need, downtown, is a small suite of offices for some of their decision-making personnel, and a telephone wire connecting that suite of offices to a data bank buried somewhere in the Mojave Desert. Some of our Business Geniuses have already discovered this to be true, and others may discover the same before downtown real estate taxes bankrupt them—and before their white-collar help (which much prefers to live in suburbia, and doesn’t much enjoy spending three hours each day commuting to and from some polluted and uncomfortable piece of downtown real estate). . . . before that white-collar help goes to work for someone else whose headquarters are located in more pleasant surroundings.

Beyond the fact that information retrieval, which used to be part and parcel of the resources of a city, is now becoming quite disembodied, and can easily be divorced from an urban location, it is becoming simpler every day to engage in all but one or two face-to-face confrontations, without actually coming within physical reach of the other party. In fact, except for lovemaking, which may not be replaced by electronics for another few months or so, there is almost nothing that we can’t do better and more comfortably by means of TV and other devices: it is much more comfortable to watch plays and movies at home than to sit in some hideous cultural center or in a drive-in movie; it is much more comfortable to shop by TV than to shop by

fighting your way through a supermarket; it is much more interesting to study by means of some well-conceived educational programs brought to you via the tube than to sit in an uncomfortable classroom or lecture hall; and so on. All this is obvious, yet I don’t think any of us realizes how profoundly and completely our needs in areas of communication are being met by radically new means that, by implication, make buildings and cities obsolete, at least in part. Even diagnosis in medical care is now handled very effectively in some areas by means of closed-circuit TV—and that may be the beginning of the end of our great, big, bulky medical centers.

What all this means, of course, is that decentralization is not only around the corner—it is taking place here and now. Only those who are very rich or very poor are trapped in cities nowadays—the very rich because they want penthouse status, which is a trifle difficult to come by in a one-story ranch house; and the very poor because they’ve been locked into slums of despair, from which they can only perform service jobs to keep downtown humming.

The vast majority—Richard Nixon’s Silent Majority—is so silent because they’re watching TV, and keeping in touch that way in their vast, suburban hinterland that now houses the bulk of Americans. Pretty soon they won’t even have to brave freeway traffic at rush hour, because all the significant jobs will be in suburbia also. (And that should solve, once and for all, our urban transportation problems.) Pretty soon the majority of Americans, and of people in other, industrialized nations, will be living in vast suburban tracts, linked to one another and to educational, cultural, and job opportunities by electronic means; our old downtown areas will become tourist attractions, probably operated by Walt Disney Enterprises, and kept much cleaner and safer and prettier by the Disney people than our present bureaucracies maintain them now. They will become quaint historic sites, like Siena and Carcassonne and the mad castles of Ludwig of Bavaria, visited by suburbanites on package tours conducted by tape-recorded tourist guides. Rockefeller Center and other beauty spots will be viewed as quaint shrines erected by earlier and more primitive civilizations; and the only housing in these vacation spots will be Hilton Hotels or Howard Johnson’s Motor Inns, plus a few ghettos containing workers needed to clean the sidewalks and change the light bulbs.

I don’t know whether you and I want to live in that sort of land, but I doubt if we really have much of a choice. Everything happening in the *real* world—as opposed to the *ideal*, anachronistic world designed in schools of architecture—is moving us in the direction of that sort of society. And since the votes are almost exclusively in the suburbs, it is highly unlikely that state and federal legislatures will appropriate any significant sums of

money to the preservation of our abandoned downtown areas. The voters are elsewhere, and Manhattan will have to be sold to the tourist industry—to the Disney people, the Hilton people, the Howard Johnsons, or (not inconceivably) back to the Indians.

I have raised the first nine questions that came into my head—the first nine outrageous questions about modern architecture that modern architects do not raise very frequently. There are many other outrageous questions one might discuss: How valid, how useful are all those wind-swept plazas that now dot and sometimes desolate our cities? How useful are our pristine parks that no one dares to traverse, day or night, without a human or canine escort? How useful are our glittering cultural centers, that attract thousands every night, at seven thirty sharp, and create monumental traffic jams—but lie dead all the rest of the time? And should “culture,” in fact, be centralized, like government? How useful are our zoning laws and city-planning commissions when a city like Houston, Texas, which has neither, is at least as interesting as Detroit, which has both—and which is rarely thought of as one of Michigan’s beauty spots?

What has happened to the architects of my generation—and, perhaps, the lawyers and doctors and philosophers and historians of my generation—is

that we stopped asking questions the day we obtained our licenses to practice our professions.

But the world that we are committed to serve has not stopped to ask outrageous questions of us, or of itself. Indeed, the world which all of us are committed to serve and enhance and reshape is asking more and more searching, more and more outrageous questions every day.

It is asking us, the architects who proclaimed a better way of life, why our buildings and our streets and our cities are falling apart. It is asking us why we, who spoke so glowingly of rational, industrialized, and economical systems of building, seem to be producing so many increasingly irrational, shoddy, and expensive structures. It is asking us, in effect, whether we know what we are doing. And it is asking us why it is that the world we have designed and built over the past fifty years or so seems so ugly, and so boring.

Many of these questions, including those I have raised, are clearly unfair. Architects have less and less say in the shaping of the man-made environment; most of it is shaped by bankers and bureaucrats. But architects do have the intelligence, presumably, to learn from their own highly visible mistakes; and architects, as citizens, have the clout to challenge the forces that undermine and compromise their best, most idealistic intentions.

Why don’t they exercise that intelligence, and that clout? □

Coming in The Atlantic: A special section of responses to Peter Blake’s “The Folly of Modern Architecture” from architects, urban planners, critics, and other interested parties.

HEADIN' FOR THE FIRST ROUNDUP

by Page Stegner

Or, how to raise your own *steak au poivre* for only slightly more than you would pay at Lutèce.

One evening, not long after my wife and I had returned to the United States from Ecuador, we were having dinner with some old friends who live in the mountains behind Santa Cruz, and my wife was describing the petrifying experience of walking into an American supermarket for the first time in three years. What was by then old hat to every housewife from Maine to California was pretty staggering to a recent arrival, even one who had kept abreast of Nixonomics through *Time* magazine and Armed Forces radio. The startling fact that no one could afford to buy anything on the supermarket shelf was compounded in my wife's mind by the incredible abundance of things being offered, so that she found herself in the confusing situation of not being able to make up her mind among all of the items that she was not going to be able to buy anyway. I suppose this is called culture shock.

For my part, I was lamenting a number of changes in the life and life-style that I have associated with Santa Cruz, California, since I first began to frequent its beaches back in the early 1950s. It has always been a place for me where simple pleasures and inexpensive living were available to anyone who wanted them. Three years ago the downtown section was a nice, funky, run-down collection of crummy shops owned by Portuguese and Italians who had been around forever. Now it is all gussied up with a mall, and redwood benches that are too low for the old people to sit on, and a mini Ghiradelli Square where you can buy embroidered blouses from Guatemala or French cookware or creative playthings of one kind and another, and where you can walk around in a funny hat

with all the other freaks in funny hats and hope that someone notices.

"What ever happened to the United Cigar Store?" I asked Eamon Barrett, my host. "Where are *our* institutions? What happened to the fun club? What became of living off the land? Why has all the style gone out of our lives?"

"No meat," grunted Eamon. "Man not live by bread alone. No meat, no style. Mysterious forces at work." Eamon is an Irish Indian.

At this moment his wife produced from the oven a roast beef so large and succulent that I began to fidget. Meat was certainly one of the institutions that had died during my absence in South America. Half the people I knew in town had become vegetarians or, at best, *Beef Plus* casserolarians. "Have no illusions about my affluence," Eamon told me as we sat down to his roast. "This meat is homegrown."

"You grew it?" I said.

"Living off the land," he answered.

"Seriously! You raised a steer?"

"You, too, can raise a steer." Eamon twinkles when he talks. You are never quite sure when he is putting you on.

"Tell me how, man," I said. "Quickly. Spare me the details."

"All you do," he replied, "is you go to the auction in Salinas on a Saturday, you buy yourself a calf for around forty or fifty dollars, bring him back and put him on my pasture until he weighs about a thousand pounds, and you eat him."

"How much land do you have?" I asked.

"Thirty-eight acres."

"It would take us two years to eat a whole cow," my wife said. She could see what was coming.

"I'll go halves with you," Eamon offered. "Or you get a couple guys and we'll buy two calves and split the work four ways."

"Work?"

"Just a little fence-mending."

"Fantastic," I said. "The cattle business. Saddle tramps and riding the range and all that. Singing

songs around the campfire with your buddies. Bringing back the style. Living off the land.”

“There’s nothing to it,” Eamon said.

And that is how it all began. I told Jim Houston and Jim told Forrest Robinson. We had a little meeting, and drank a lot of bourbon, and formed the *As Is Cattlemen’s Association of Santa Cruz County*. Two middle-aged writers, a professor of Renaissance Literature, and an Irish mathematician with thirty-eight acres in his backyard. We were not completely foolish and irresponsible. We did set ourselves a limit. Thirty bucks apiece, or sixty for a cow. “That’s my top dollar,” Houston said. “How do you think we can do for sixty dollars, Eamon?”

“We go Saturday,” Eamon said. “For sixty bucks we buy herd of buffalo.”

That is how it all begins.

Eamon’s truck is a disgraceful old wreck. The horn doesn’t work and the taillights are out. So are the brakes. It’s mostly rust and wire, and one fender flaps like a broken wing, but fortunately on Saturday morning the fog is so thick all the way from the coast to the Salinas valley that we don’t have to worry about the highway patrol. A good thing too. Once I got a speeding ticket on the way home from gathering mussels up near Davenport, and the fine ran the price of dinner that night to about five bucks a mussel. You can’t live very well off the land, or sea, that way.

About nine o’clock we pull into the auction grounds and coast to a stop, peer through the mist at the parking lot and the holding pens, both empty and without a sign of life, peer at Eamon, our resident expert, peer at each other. Eamon climbs out of the pickup and shrugs. “Maybe the auction’s Sundays,” he says.

“We thought you’d been here before,” we say.

“I was.”

“On what *day* were you here before?” we ask.

“I think it was Saturday.” He goes into his twinkle routine. “Hey, I remember a coffee shop around the side of that barn. I think. We get some eats, maybe?”

There is, in fact, a coffee shop. And there is, in fact, an auction, only it starts at noon. Eamon reminds us that he did not specify a time, and that, in any case, a self-respecting ranch hand gets up at the crack of dawn. So we should be pleased with ourselves and kindly get the hell off his back. There is no alternative, and we settle down to a glazed doughnut and a cup of coffee.

Cattle trucks start to roll in and unload sometime around ten, and the four of us mosey over to

the pens, where a crowd of authentic-looking farmers has gathered to look over today’s bill of fare. You really have to see this scene to believe it. Here we are all dressed up in our cowboy hats and boots, talking out of the sides of our mouths and standing around with our thumbs hooked in our Levi pockets, and our thighs sort of thrust forward and out, like we’re not too familiar with this thing called *walking*. I mean, we really *look* pretty good. In fact, I look a lot like Clint Eastwood. We look as if we know what’s happening, as if we do this kind of thing all the time—buying cows, selling cows; we’re cattlemen, right? and we’re just out here hanging around the chutes swapping lies before the big action starts inside and we get down to the squint-eyed business of heavy-duty dealing. Houston makes a pretty passable Lee Van Cleef, does he not? Eamon looks like Man Mountain Dean. Robinson . . . well, Robinson has on these, ah . . . *tennis* shoes. *White* tennis shoes, with blue stripes down the sides. The rest of us keep moving away.

We’re feeling a bit foolish anyway, standing there in our Charlie Tweedle Stetsons and our \$24.95 Acme boots with the stitching on the toes and the red, white, and blue plastic eagle inlaid up the side. We don’t know one cow from another, and by now it is clear that our leader doesn’t either. True, he’s done this once before, but obviously on dumb luck. I hear a lot of talk going on around us about drop calves, weaners, Holsteins, Herefords, and heifers, Angus and white face, Angus crosses. One fellow points to a group of four calves and says, “Them’s gonna make it.” His companion nods emphatically and points to another group near by. “Them sure ain’t.” I look from the one bunch to the other about fifteen times, but for the life of me I cannot see the slightest difference between them.

After a while I give up on the calves and sneak over by a chute where some large, very fat steers are being unloaded and prodded down an alley into pens. A cowboy standing next to me watches them go by, then shakes his head and says, more or less in my direction, “Sheetisakes. Looka’ that.” For a moment I think he’s referring to me, something so obvious that no reply is expected. He hooks a toe between the rails of the fence and contemplates the disgraceful arrivals. “Must of kep’ ’em dry three, four days,” he says.

I nod. “Must of.”

“Some asshoe buys one a them’s gonna get sixty pounds a water along with his beef.”

“For sure,” I tell him. I haven’t the slightest idea what this conversation is all about, but I keep my cover intact. Right now I’m just worried about how to tell a Holstein from a Hereford-Angus cross, since they’re both black and white, have four legs and a tail, and go moo.

“What difference does it make?” Robinson asks.



"One is for eating and one is for milking," I tell him. I know that much, at least.

Robinson chews the skin on his lip while he thinks that one over. "Aha. I see." Different cow, different function. Another complication.

Eamon, who has been wandering around inside the auction barn and apparently asking *questions*, comes trotting over with a look of confidence on his face and informs us that things are once again under control. "Here's the deal," he says. "What we're after is an Angus or a Hereford or an Angus-Hereford cross. A bull calf. Don't go bidding on heifers. Now, we don't want anything under three hundred pounds because that way we're pretty sure that whatever we buy isn't going to up and die on us, and we want to hang back on the bidding because all the amateurs get a wild hair the first eight or ten calves that come out, and after that things simmer down a bit. There's nothing to it."

"Oh, yeah? Well, tell me this, Mr. County Extension Agent, these bulls and heifers . . . how do you tell them apart?" The poser of this question shall remain anonymous.

The other members of the As Is Cattleman's Association, however, are convulsed. "Haw haw haw. Har har harrrrrr. Well you simple ass, one has teats and one has testicles."

"Is that so? The reason I asked is that I'm standing here looking over about two dozen calves, and as far as I can see none of them has either of the items you mention."

Pause and silence. He appears to be right.

Auction time is getting closer, and unless we are willing to go home skunked, we're going to have to get some answers fast. Eamon Barrett's ten-year-old son, Aaron, whom I haven't mentioned before because I didn't think he'd come in handy, suddenly strikes my imagination as a possible solution to a lot of problems. There is nothing shameful about a small boy asking questions of his elders, especially if we move off to the side and explain that he doesn't belong to us. No sir, he's none of our business, the dumb kid, running around asking people how you tell the ladies from the gents. "Lookit, Aaron," I say, "you see that guy over there that looks like Marshall Dillon? I want you to go over there and ask him . . ."

"OK," Aaron says, and trots off. Robinson and I light up a Marlboro.

In ten minutes he's back. "Holstein heifers are going around fifty-eight to sixty-five; bulls around

fifty-two. Guernseys about the same. Hereford and Angus bulls from fifty-eight to sixty-eight, if they're under four hundred pounds. Heifers less. Drop calves by the head and ranging from thirty-seven to forty-five depending on . . ."

"Hold it, Aaron, HOLD IT. Thirty-seven to forty-five what? What are we talking about here? Dollars? Cents per pound? Gestation period?"

"How should I know?" Aaron says. "I'm just telling you what the guy told me."

"OK, never mind," I tell him. "Did you find out how to tell the males from the females?"

Aaron snorts. "When were *you* born?"

In the auction arena we take seats and sit quietly while the bidding begins on the goats. They are paraded out one by one and whipped into a frantic little dance by the auctioneer's assistants in the ring, two adolescent morons in undersized hats and oversized pimples who chew gum, smoke, and look bored. The effort is obviously a strain. They are repeatedly reminded by their puppeteer to get the animals out of the ring once they have been sold. It seems like a lot to remember.

Sometime between the sale of pigs and horsemeat, Jim leans over and regards me with a cold and clammy eye. "There has been a new dimension added to this caper," he says. "I've been doing a little figuring, and a four-hundred-pound calf times sixty cents a pound, assuming we can get one for that, comes to two hundred and forty dollars. Now, two hundred and forty dollars is somewhat in excess of our top figure . . . a hundred and eighty in excess, as a matter of fact, and I'm beginning to wonder about this whole setup. It's not exactly the giveaway you advertised."

"Well, let's hang in there," I whisper. "Let's see if we can get one at around two hundred pounds. That should be safe enough, and it would only be sixty bucks apiece."

Jim thinks this over for a few minutes. "OK," he says, "but sixty's my limit."

In addition to the previously mentioned items that we do not know about the cattle business, add the following. We have absolutely no conception of the size or age of a two-hundred-pound cow. When the goats and pigs and sheep have all been sold, when we finally get down to the main event, beef on the hoof, we discover to our horror that the *smallest* calf, still wobbling on its pins and wet from—birth?—weighs in at around one-fifty.

"We've got a problem," I murmur in Jim's ear.

"Yet another dimension," he says sadly. "If we're going to get anything old enough to be sure of its survival, we're going to have to go higher."

"What do you think?"

"Oh, man, I dunno. Maybe two-fifty?"

"I guess. That would be another fifteen bucks apiece."

We sit and watch while the drop calves are auctioned off, calculating in our heads, trying to re-

member the last figure in the checkbook, anticipating the howl that is going to go up at home when the truth comes out. Just about this time a fine-looking Hereford calf trots in weighing about two hundred and seventy pounds (weights are flashed on a scale behind the auctioneer), and Eamon says, "Hot damn, I'm gonna get that one." The bidding starts low and climbs grudgingly to around fifty-one cents a pound.

"Pretty cheap," I remark offhandedly to the guy on my right.

He flicks me a glance and says something that I translate as "Noah's snot."

"I beg your pardon?"

"Snot cheap for a heifer."

Eamon's bid of fifty-two has just been topped by a half when I lean over and jab him in the ribs. "Heifer," I croak.

"Huh?"

"A lady. A milk cow. No nads."

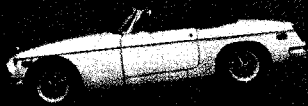
Eamon's salvation, however, is briefly enjoyed. A few minutes later, thinking he is buying an Angus steer, he outbids the field on a Holstein bull, and comes in a winner at ten cents a pound higher than the going rate. But we don't find this out until after the auction, and so for the moment Eamon is happy.

Houston and I are cleverly hanging back, waiting for the right breed, gender, and weight. After about half an hour a good-looking calf comes out, strong and sleek, a healthy Black Angus with the filet mignon just hanging off it in chunks, and the auctioneer starts in his mile-a-minute patter. *Fifty five five five five five FIVE who'll gimme six six six six SIX I got six who'll make it seven seven seven . . .* I take a fast glance at the scale markings before they disappear, and am amazed to see that only two hundred and seventy-five pounds is registered. A little more than we agreed on during our fifth recalculation, but such a gorgeous piece of meat, and he seems a lot bigger . . . Jim and I nod to each other, and up goes my finger. Fifty-seven. Somebody makes it fifty-eight. I go to fifty-nine. The opposition says sixty, and at this point I begin to get cold feet. Pausing to think, I put my thumb in my nose and . . . oops, sixty and a half. It's enough, it turns out, to win us a cow.

Shaking hands, we pick up our tag and head up the alley where you pay your money and get a pink slip that lets you take your animal home. It's a little more money than we'd agreed on, but what the hell. We're jubilant. We did it. We bought a freezer full of beef. I feel like Ernest Hemingway in that picture where he's standing there with his fishing pole and a shit-eating grin and a twelve-foot marlin hanging from the hoist. But then I notice that Jim, who has just taken the bill from the lady behind the counter, has gone a little pale and is looking vaguely around him for a place to sit. His hat has slid down so that it's bending out the



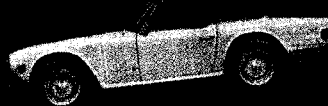
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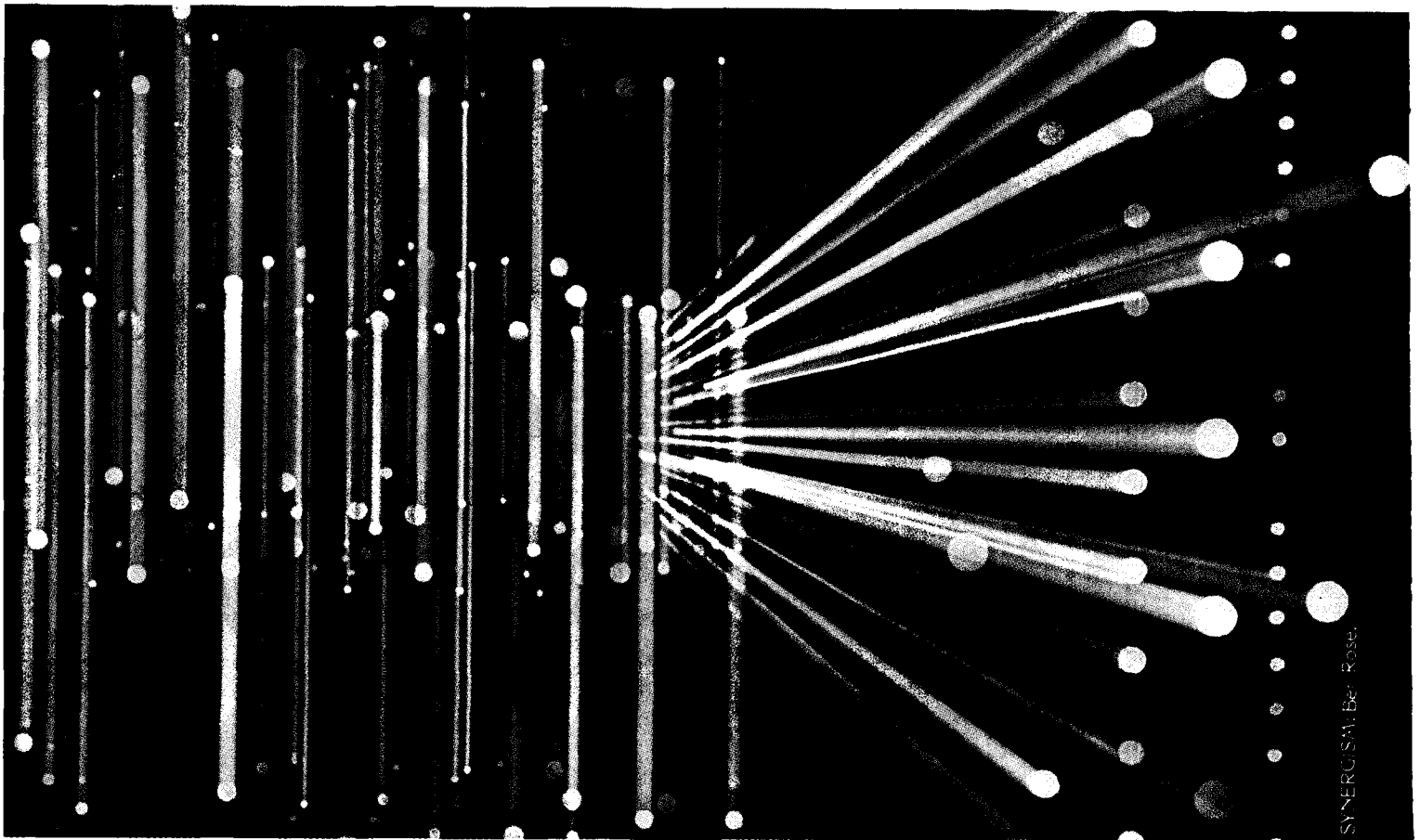
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tops of his ears, and he has a bruised look around the eyes. He's developed a list to starboard. "What is it?" I say, and he hands me the bill. It appears I read the scales wrong. Our cow weighs *four* hundred and seventy-five big ones. \$287.38.

We are no longer speaking. We slog out to the pickup, help push it around the parking lot until it starts, and follow it down to the loading chute. It's raining, of course, and my twenty-nine-dollar Charlie Tweedle cowboy hat is beginning to melt. Gone are the snappy phrases from the wild, wild West. Gone is the *esprit de corps*, the "atta pepper, hum it around the infield" spirit with which we began this miserable venture. Gone is my bank account. The kid who helps with the animals brings Eamon's Holstein, and it goes quietly enough into the truck. Our behemoth, however, wants no part of that broken-down Chevy. He is finally persuaded by an electric cattle prod to give it a try, but once he discovers he's trapped, he begins to bust everything in sight. He butts the rear window and cracks it, kicks a piece out of the side rail, jams his leg through a rotten board in the truck bed, and falls down. "You want to watch that sumbitch," the kid says. "Pretty feisty."

"What are you gonna call him?" Robinson wants to know.

Houston stares at him in disbelief. "Humbert Humbert," he says after a while.

"Tie his head down low," the kid says. "That way he can't climb out."

"Eamon's gonna call his Holstein As Is."

"You get him castrated," the kid says, "and he'll calm down."

The conclusions to be drawn from our day at the auction are so obvious that they hardly need examination. But the fact is, we could have done much worse than Humbert Humbert and As Is, and if we paid a few cents more a pound than we should have, or made ourselves look a little silly, no serious damage was done. Come to think of it, we had fun. And we will each wind up with nearly three hundred pounds of meat for which we will have paid about a hundred and fifty dollars. That comes to around fifty cents a pound. Not bad. Nothing to it.

Except . . . ah, there are a few *hidden* expenses that should be mentioned. On the return trip to Santa Cruz, Eamon decides he'll ride in the back of the truck with the cattle, just in case Humbert decides to commit suicide on the Interstate and deprive us of the pleasure of nipping him in the bud. As it were. Castration is mild in comparison to the fantasies that lurk in the depths of our collective consciousness. We are traveling at thirty miles an hour along a ten-mile stretch of two-lane road that leads to the freeway, and although Robinson, who is driving, is unaware of it (there being no rear-view mirror), about 300 cars are stacked up behind us, and they are definitely being . . . *impeded*.

That's the word the highway patrolman uses when he pulls us over to the side and starts writing out the ticket. "Impeding traffic," he says, and launches into a boring recitation on the perils of poking. "You guys got cars stuck behind you all the way back to Monterey."

"Izzat so?" Robinson says.

"Yeah. And I'm the guy who picks up the pieces after people like you—" The cop stops in mid-sentence and begins to look at the Chevy, like he's seeing it for the first time. "Say, what is this . . . vehicle?"

"Cattle truck," Robinson tells him.

"Cattle truck, huh. OK, wise guy, let's try the lights there and just make sure they work." Robinson pulls the switch. "Now hit the dimmers." Robinson hits the dimmers, and the cop pulls out his ticket book. "Horn?" Broken. "Side mirrors?" No glass. "Brake lights?" Out.

The inspection proves too much for Humbert, and he decides to climb up in the cab with the rest of us. There is a shower of glass as his head goes through the rear window, a wet muzzle smacks me in the ear, and there is a general competition to see who can bellow the loudest.

"This vehicle's got no back window," the patrolman says. "Gotta ticket you on that. You gotta have a window."

So when he is all finished, and gone off down the road in his 400-horsepower economy special, and we're sitting there in the wreckage, we total up the citations and figure out that the price of beef has just gone up 25 cents a pound.

In the cattle business it's the hidden expenses that kill you. You get nicked and dined to death. A bale of alfalfa here, a salt lick there, a roll of barbed wire to mend the fence where your cows tore it up, a box of bandages to mend the skin where the barbed wire tore *it* up, sacks of corn at \$8.50 a hundredweight. You discover that in order to get good meat, you have to grain your animals, at least during the last three hundred pounds of gain. You discover that it takes eight pounds of feed to produce a pound of meat, and if you're paying eight cents a pound for grain, you can just add sixty-four cents to the final per-pound cost of your hamburger. And then, of course, you have your medical expenses. These can vary tremendously, depending on the health and vigor of your cows and cowboys. Let me explain.

On the Saturday after the auction, early in the morning, we meet at the As Is Cattle Ranch for what our jester, Forrest Robinson, keeps referring to as "the roundup." Time has mellowed us. We are no longer in a rage with Humbert Humbert; we just hate him with a dull frontal ache, and we are mildly hysterical at the prospect of his mutilation.

DEWAR'S PROFILES

(Pronounced Do-ers "White Label")



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DANNY VILLANUEVA

HOME: Los Angeles, California

AGE: 35

PROFESSION: Vice President of Spanish International Broadcasting Network

HOBBIES: Talking with his people, helping with scholarship fund-raising events, organizing sandlot ballgames (he formerly played with the L.A. Rams and Dallas Cowboys).

LAST BOOK READ: "The Ethnic Factor"

LAST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Headed a team of newsmen who made history by filming the first scenes of a skyjacking in progress on a plane, which ended without violence.

QUOTE: "Remove 'can't', 'won't' and 'shouldn't' from your vocabulary when they restrict attainment. Persevere if you truly believe your cause is just."

PROFILE: Proud. Courageous. Committed. Speaks out firmly and often for equality of opportunity for Mexican Americans.

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Headin' for the First Roundup

"Eamon, how big is that pasture?"

Eamon informs us again that it is thirty-eight acres. Our strategy is to drive the animals down into one corner, and then all we do is lay a rope over them.

"Have you done this before?"

"Lots of times."

"Man, I'm telling you," Robinson says, "if five men and two boys can't catch one lousy calf before it's time for the champagne brunch, then we ought to hang up our spurs and take to raising *sheep*."

"Everybody relax," Eamon assures us. "The whole thing is very simple. There's *nothing* to it."

Yes, patient reader, we have heard that line before. I am going to spare you the details of the chase, the forty man-hour/sixteen boy-hour chase, up and down the mountainsides of coastal California, over fences and under fences, through tangled brush and swollen creek, through the gumbo mud of hillside winter pastures, to fail and fail and fail once more. There is only one image worth recording. Picture a small, very black cow, a muddy white face, and two beady eyes that peer at you sullenly from behind a thicket of coyote brush. The eyes, the ears, the top of the head—nothing more really visible. A bovine Kilroy peeking over the barricade from a wary distance of fifty feet. Because that is as close as we ever got. Five men and two boys. A regiment of guile, cunning, and stealth. Humbert simply ran through us, away from us, over us, and around us. We never laid a glove on him. The little Holstein, As Is, gave up without a struggle. The vet did the job, and As Is was back grazing in the meadow before the sun was warm. But not Humbert. Humbert was not interested. All day long Humbert was not interested. Come on, Humbert. It's just a little vasectomy.

About five o'clock we straggle out of the canyon and back up to the house. The vet, who has come back to see if we have had any luck, shakes his head. "Only way we're going to get him is with a sedative gun. Cost you seventeen dollars more, but it would sure save you fellas a lot of wear and tear." What gives him the idea we're worn and torn? We always lie face down in the gravel at the end of a lazy day.

"It will have to be next weekend," the vet says. "I'll have to borrow the gun."

"We'll all be here," I tell him. "We don't care what it costs."

As it turned out, we weren't all there. I developed a cold from running around that day in the damp and drizzle, and by Thursday I was thinking of calling the vet to ask him to come by *my* house with his sedative gun. I called Robinson instead, to tell him I wouldn't be able to make it. His wife answered. "Forrest can't come to the phone," she said. "He has poison oak so bad he can't walk." She kind of giggled and added, "It's got him right

where he lives. I think he's going to be sterile." Humbert's revenge.

Later that day I called Houston to see if he was going to witness the great event. "Listen man, I'm not going to be able to go out there Saturday. I've got poison oak like you wouldn't *believe*. My scalp, under my hair, between my toes, and worse even than that. I think I'm going to be sterile."

"You too," I tell him sadly.

"What?"

"Humbert's revenge."

"You better believe it," he says. "It's cost me twenty-five bucks already in cortisone shots. Add that to the soaring cost of *homegrown* meat."

But Humbert's real revenge comes on Saturday, with only Eamon there to testify. The vet makes his twenty-dollar house call. He brings his ten-dollar sedative and his seven-dollar sedative gun, and together they go down in the lower pasture where Hum is peacefully grazing. There is a little *peekaboo-I-see-you* maneuvering, with H. being careful to keep a clump of coyote brush between himself and this Eamon. What he doesn't notice is the vet sneaking up on him from behind, and before he knows what has happened this flanker has pulled out his piece and zapped him in the arse from a distance of about fifty feet. Eamon joins the vet, they wait for Humbert to keel over, which, after a suitable length of time, he does, and they rush upon his prostrate form. The vet prepares his equipment. A titter runs through the crowd. In the wings forty bands and a brace of cannon. The tension is eye-popping as Eamon slowly lifts Humbert's tail. The high priest, his knife glittering, sinks to his knees. . . .

The vet turns and looks at Eamon. "This here critter's been cut already."

The ending? Well, there isn't any, and there won't be for about a year and a half. But for those Safeway-haters who are going into the cattle business, we offer the following statistics.

Cost of cow	\$287.38
Estimated cost of feed for cow	224.00
Cost of veterinary service for cow	40.00
Cost of medical service for cowboys	97.33
Estimated cost of slaughtering and butchering	135.00
Fines, penalties, and vehicle repairs	103.82
Total number of man hours (250): Cost estimated at minimum wage	479.15

It works out to only about \$4.00 a pound for meat, and you get a story to tell, you cure your supermarket schizophrenia and save on a shrink's fee, and you gets lots of exercise. Really, living off the land is easy. There's nothing to it at all. □

THE BANDIT WAS MY NEIGHBOR

A story by Francine Prose

On warm summer evenings, my grandmother sits on the traffic island in the middle of Sixth Avenue, and tells Mrs. Russo about her bandit lover.

City buses speed past, blowing fumes in their faces. Drunks lurch toward them, begging for quarters. But the two old widows, roosting on their bench like enormous gray-headed chickens, never notice. For they are not really on that bench, or on that grimy concrete strip, or even in New York City.

They are in Sicily, fifty years ago, in the days of Italo Giuliano.

Ordinarily, my grandmother is a quiet woman, who rarely talks. But when she tells the story of Italo Giuliano, she speaks in the grand style, and her voice is assured and strong.

"In America," she says, always beginning the same way, "whenever I heard people telling stories about the great bandits, I wanted to remind them that Italo Giuliano—the greatest bandit leader of all—was born in my own town. But I was smart. I kept quiet. I thought it would be foolish to let strangers know I once had inside information about a man like Italo Giuliano."

"Not only foolish," agrees Mrs. Russo, "but dangerous! You can never tell when they'll use something like that against you."

"Yet in fact, Mrs. Russo," continues my grandmother, "I had the most inside information of all. Because ever since I was a baby in my cradle, my window looked directly into his."

"Our families were in business together. My father bought sheep from the local herdsmen. Italo's father sold the mutton in his shop. The partnership had been started by our grandfathers—two best friends, so distrustful of each other that they built their houses a few feet apart, to keep each other honest.

"They spied on one another constantly. Whenever the herdsmen came to our house, Italo's grandfather appeared at his window, pretending to check on the weather. Whenever the Giuliano family ate lunch, my grandfather watched carefully, making sure that his partner hadn't taken the crown roast for himself.

"But by the time Italo and I were born, our grandfathers were dead. And our fathers, members of a more enlightened generation, no longer kept up the constant surveillance.

"I was the only one with the spy's blood still running in my veins. And so, all through the rainy days of my childhood, I stood at my window, and watched Italo Giuliano.

"It must have been the pure thrill of spying which attracted me, because it wasn't a very interesting sight. All Italo ever did was read. Day after day, I watched him mumbling to himself and turning the pages with a faraway look in his eye. He was oblivious to everything else. He never even flinched when his brothers teased him, pelting him with chunks of raw mutton, gory sheep's hearts which splashed his books with blood.

"Our village was very isolated, high up in the mountains, fifty kilometers from the nearest school. So Italo had been obliged to teach himself. He began with the words on flour sacks and tobacco packages. He read the family Bible seven times. He borrowed the priest's missal, and pored over the senseless Latin. He even took to standing at the crossroads, flagging down passing trucks and badgering the drivers for newspapers from distant cities.

"Whenever Mrs. Giuliano heard about that, there was something to see from my window. 'This reading is turning you into a bandit!' she'd scream at her son.

"Right from the start, Italo was a sensitive boy.

After each of his mother's harangues, he'd run away from home, and crawl through the narrow alley between our houses.

"'Angela,' he'd whisper up at me. 'I'm on the run. Take me in.'

"I'd let him stay in my mother's kitchen until the good smells made him so hungry that he forgot his quarrel. But one day, even I lost patience. 'What good is spying,' I thought to myself, 'if you're always spying on the same old thing?'

"'Italo,' I said, 'maybe your mother's right. Why do you waste your time reading? Do you like it when your brothers tease you? Do you want everyone to call you a bookworm?'

"'Yes,' replied Italo Giuliano, 'I do.'

"I was just a little girl then, with a little girl's mind. But suddenly, as I looked at my friend, I understood as well as any woman: Italo wanted to be teased about his reading. That way, no one would tease him about his looks.

"For Italo Giuliano was the homeliest boy in Sicily. Even as a child, his skin was covered with purple cysts the size of grapes. His nose looked as if God had stuck a lump of dough in the middle of his face. His eyebrows grew together over his nose, in one long eyebrow which reminded me of a frowning, hairy mouth.

"When he was small, the village children teased him mercilessly, saying that he resembled the putrefying sheep's heads behind his father's shop. Yet by the time he started to read, they no longer called him 'the Sheep.' Italo thought that he owed his reprieve to his new knowledge, but he was wrong. The children's sudden kindness had nothing to do with his reading. Rather, it was this: Everyone in the village had begun to recognize the sweet nature beneath that sour face.

"He was the most generous and patient boy who ever lived," says my grandmother, hugging herself so hard that the flesh trembles on her arms. "He was my best friend, he would have done anything for me. Whenever my father hit me, I ran to Italo. Whenever I was sick, he sat on my bed, and read aloud to me. And whenever I woke up screaming from a bad dream, I'd call across the alley, and make Italo walk with me until I was calm."

"Didn't your parents worry?" asks Mrs. Russo. "A little girl like that, staying out all night with her boyfriend?"

"They wished they had reason to worry," says my grandmother. "They would have liked me to marry Italo someday, for business reasons. And they knew how I admired his sweetness. But they also knew that the combination of his good nature and his homely face meant that I would never love him as a man.

"It was that way with all the girls. We loved

Italo so much that we let him stay near us even after we'd started chasing the other boys away with stones. 'Look, Italo,' we'd say. 'Look how much we love you.'

"But it wasn't really love. Love was what we felt for those other boys, who teased us so meanly that we had to chase them away. And Italo was the one whom we punished for their sins.

"We took terrible advantage of him. We asked him for favors, sent him on errands, and never did anything in return. Sometimes, when our mothers gave us custard, Italo would ask us to save him the last bite. 'Of course,' we'd say. But we always forgot."

"Then why did he put up with it?" interrupts Mrs. Russo. "Were you girls his only friends?"

"He was too good-natured to resist," replies my grandmother. "Besides, he had another friend, a boy."

"And who was that?"

Of course, Mrs. Russo knows the answer. She's heard this story a thousand times. But this last question is her favorite; she's been leading up to it all along. And now, she settles back on the bench, waiting with delight. "What was his name?" she asks.

"His name," says my grandmother, "was Italo Giuliano."

"**T**hey were distant cousins," she continues, "related by some long-ago marriage which no one could remember. Yet after my neighbor was christened Italo, the other Mrs. Giuliano, the café owner's wife, stormed through the village, cursing their kinship to high heaven.

"'All my life,' she said, 'I've wanted a son named Italo. And now that old witch has beaten me to it. But I'll have my way yet. I'll name my next son Italo, even if it means that there will be two boys in this town with the same name.'

"'Don't do it,' the women advised her. 'You'll doom them to confusion. They'll be hobbled for life.'

"'Then I'll call him Italo Salvatore,' said the café owner's wife. 'But that's the furthest I'll go.'

"Yet the villagers need never have worried about confusing the two Italos, for no two boys could have been more different. Italo Salvatore grew tall and handsome. His eyes had a dreamy look, like those of the saints on the chapel wall. Unlike my neighbor, he was illiterate, and very charming—with a flashing wink, a quick smile, and a terrible mean streak.

"At first, the two Italos ignored each other. But, before they entered their teens, they suddenly decided to become friends. After that, they acted as if their common name were some hilarious private joke. Whenever the handsome boy was called, my

neighbor would answer; when a traveling dentist pulled my neighbor's tooth, the other Italo faked a howl of pain. For a while, they even dressed alike, claiming to be twins.

"And so the view from my window began to change. Late at night, Italo still sat alone, reading. But, in the evenings, he and his friend played together, pretending to be pirates, soldiers, bandit kings.

"Italo Salvatore was always the leader in those games. It seemed wrong. Not only was my neighbor older, but, even then, he had the courage and ingenuity which were to make him the most beloved bandit chief in all Sicily. But the other's mean streak gave him an advantage. Like the girls, he mistreated his good-natured friend. He bossed him around like an unpaid servant. He even teased him about his looks, saying that no sensible girl would ever love a boy whose eyebrows grew together over his nose.

"Italo Salvatore had no such problems, and that, too, was a source of power. For all the village girls adored him, adored that dreamy expression. Naturally, they threw stones at him. But after they'd chased him away, they surrounded my neighbor and pumped him for information about his handsome friend.

"Listen," they'd say, 'what does that stupid Italo Salvatore say about us, behind our backs?'

"He never mentions you," beamed Italo, proud to be the chosen confidant of so many beautiful girls.

"And so the two boys complemented each other. Their friendship seemed to increase the homely one's familiarity, and the handsome one's mystery."

"Eventually, Italo Salvatore also became my friend. At first he didn't like me; and my neighbor had kept us apart, as if he were unwilling to share us. But gradually, Italo Salvatore learned that I was clever, that he could treat me like another boy; and my neighbor came around. So the three of us began to play together.

"Every Saturday morning, we went for long walks through the fields. My neighbor and I always lagged slightly behind, while Italo Salvatore ran ahead, searching for buried treasure. Sometimes, he'd find an old spoon, a rusty coin, a used-up cartridge. Once, he unearthed a small, tortoiseshell comb, and gave it to me, saying that girls' things made him sick.

"At home, I washed the comb, and wrapped it in a cloth, as if it really were a treasure. For, in giving me that present, Italo Salvatore had won my heart. Not that I adored him, like those giggling girls. But I didn't want him to treat me like another boy.

"And so, on those Saturday morning walks, all

my clever remarks were aimed at Italo Salvatore. I wanted to impress him, to intrigue him, to make him laugh. I even bought a miniature of St. Michael, because the saint's dreamy expression reminded me of Italo Salvatore.

"Sometimes, I wondered if my neighbor was hurt by my crush on his handsome friend. But Italo never seemed to mind; he never seemed to notice. His sweet good nature never changed.

"Of course he doesn't care, I thought, he doesn't think of me that way.

"In fact, he didn't seem to think of anyone that way. For, in those troublesome times, Italo alone seemed unaffected by those strange things which were happening to the rest of us, those changes, those daily surprises. He grew taller; his voice deepened; his complexion got worse. Yet he never seemed confused, unhappy, full of new secrets.

"Lucky Italo, I thought. It's easy for him.

"But late one night, as I stood at my window, I saw something which made me realize I'd been wrong.

"It was a hot evening in July. Italo's family had gone out to escape the heat, leaving him alone. Spying from my darkened room, I saw him take the pincers which his mother used on stubborn pinfeathers. I saw him stare into the mirror, tense with concentration.

"And then, I saw Italo Giuliano tweeze the hairs from that place where his eyebrows grew together, above his nose."

"So perhaps Italo's change was only slow in coming. For by the next summer, when Italo Salvatore returned from that fateful trip to Palermo, my neighbor was clearly ready to change something deeper than his overgrown eyebrows.

"The boys were fifteen. Early in June, Italo Salvatore had gone with his father to see an uncle in the city. And he came back a different man. The city had turned him into a gangster. He'd bought a sheepskin jacket, which he wore with the collar turned up. He chain-smoked cigarettes. He mumbled out of the corner of his mouth. And he narrowed his eyes into such thin slits that I could no longer see their dreamy expression.

"Immediately, my neighbor began to copy him. From my window, I saw him stretching the collar of his sweater until it hung in rolls around his neck. And, as he narrowed his eyes and twisted his mouth, he looked so exceptionally homely that I almost cried.

"Within a week, the two Italos became the village bullies. They shook down children for pennies. They insulted the girls with dirty names. 'Stay away from those two,' our mothers warned us. 'They're nothing but trouble.'

"If that had been true, we would never have lis-

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tened to our mothers; we would have worshipped those boys like Jesus. But we knew they were only imitation gangsters, pretending to be tough; and we despised them for it. Italo Salvatore lost all his fascination for me. And my neighbor turned so nasty that I couldn't stand to see him. We stopped speaking, and I mourned the loss of Italo's good nature as if it were a dead man.

"All the village girls felt as I did—all, that is, but one. For it was rumored that little Maria Gozzi had become Italo Salvatore's mistress, and was meeting him at night, behind the church.

"My neighbor, on the other hand, had given up his love. He would have died before he read another book. Mrs. Giuliano had gotten her wish, but it had not brought peace to the family. As I spied on them from my window, I saw her raging harder than ever, cursing Italo's rotten gangster ways.

"One night, after one of those battles, a strange thing happened. Italo stormed out of his house, and squeezed through the narrow alley, just as he'd done as a boy.

"‘Angela,’ he whispered, ‘I’m on the run. Take me in.’

"‘No,’ I said. ‘You’ve gotten too nasty. Be a gangster if you want, but not in my home.’

"But a moment later, I changed my mind. For the sake of our old friendship, I let him in; for the sake of those nights he'd comforted me, I let him sit on my bed. But that evening, he couldn't sit still. Suddenly, he sprang toward me, pinning me against the pillows.

"‘Angela!’ he cried. ‘All week, Italo Salvatore’s been telling me what it’s like to kiss Maria Gozzi. And I want to try it myself. Please, let me do it with you, as an experiment, just to see what it’s like!’

"‘You’re crazy!’ I screamed. ‘That’s no way to ask a girl. And even if it was, I wouldn’t do it with you.’

"‘That’s just what Italo Salvatore told me,’ said my neighbor. ‘All the girls protest like that.’ So he refused to believe me, and kept on pressing his homely face against mine until he saw I was seri-



ous. Then, without a word, he got up and left the house.

"The next morning, as I looked across the alley, I noticed that Italo's bed was empty. And it stayed empty, for two years."

My grandmother sighs, and reaches down to brush some imaginary dust off her thick black stockings. "A lot happens in two years," she says. "Maria Gozzi got pregnant. Italo Salvatore got married. He settled down, took over the management of his father's café, and soon developed such a paunch that I wondered what I ever saw in him.

"I, too, settled down. That fall, my parents began mentioning Anthony Bruno, ten times a day. 'He's a good boy,' said my mother. 'He'll inherit his father's bakery. He'll take good care of you.'

"I took the hint; it was time for me to marry, anyway. So Anthony and I moved into my father's house. He worked in the bakery all day; at night, he sat in the café, playing cards with his friends. It was comfortable, married life. It was the way everyone lived.

"I was five months pregnant with my first child when Italo Giuliano came home.

"By then, I'd stopped spying on the Giuliano family. So it was only an accident that I first saw Italo from the window. I stood very quietly, and stared. I saw that he'd kept his gangster ways. He'd bought a real sheepskin jacket, heavy boots, and a funny cap, like a shepherd's. I noticed that he'd grown a little less homely. And later that evening, when he came to visit, I looked closer, and saw something else: I saw that he'd brought his old good nature home with him.

"At first, I was a little nervous when he kissed me hello, for I remembered that night when he'd pressed his face against mine. I pushed my belly forward, wishing that I showed more than I did. But, as I watched him greeting my family in his calm, friendly way, I knew I had nothing to fear. Indeed, he was so much the trusted old friend that my husband Anthony didn't hesitate to go play cards, leaving us alone.

"After Anthony left, we couldn't talk. There was a distance between us, even wider than that angry space which had come between us at the start of Italo's gangster days. Once again, at least, we were pleasant to each other. But we were no longer friends.

"Where have you been?" I asked him.

"In Palermo," he said.

"What's it like?" I said.

"He began to tell me about Palermo. But it sounded wrong, like a description he'd read in a book, or had heard from Italo Salvatore. He wasn't describing any place he'd ever been.

"All right," I interrupted. "All right. What do you do there?"

"I do what I want," he said. "And no one takes advantage of me." Then, he kissed me good-bye, and went home.

"That night, as I lay beside my husband Anthony, and stared into the darkened windows of the Giuliano house, I tried to be happy. 'It's good,' I told myself. 'Italo's come back.' But suddenly, I recalled that distance between us, and felt the loss of my childhood, felt it like an empty space, like a missing tooth.

"As it happened, the other villagers were even more upset by Italo's return. They began to whisper about him, spreading rumors so ugly that mothers sent their children out to play before they would even discuss it. It was disgusting, they said. Italo Giuliano had seduced a fourteen-year-old girl, Italo Salvatore's little sister. He had bewitched her, filled her head with funny ideas. He'd taken her home with him, and was living shamelessly, in sin, beneath his poor mother's own roof.

"By the time I heard the rumors, I knew they were true. For I had seen it from my window. Night after night, I watched them making love, their bodies glistening in the moonlight. I watched Italo whispering in her ear, telling her stories of city life, of Palermo, of God knows what.

"It was just the kind of thing I'd hoped to see, when, as a girl, I'd spied on Italo. But it didn't make me happy; I wanted it to end.

"Of course, it couldn't last. The whispers were growing louder. The scandal could no longer be contained. Three times a day, Mrs. Giuliano went to Mass, begging the Virgin to end her shame.

"Then one night, as if in answer to her prayers, a band of men converged on the Giuliano house. Led by Italo Salvatore, they seized the sleeping couple, and dragged them out of bed. Beating and kicking them, they took them to the edge of town, and threatened to kill them if they ever returned.

"But three weeks later, when the girl came back, she was such a pitiful sight that even the cruelest of them couldn't bring himself to execute that harsh sentence.

"I still remember how she stood there, wailing, wringing her sunburned hands. 'Kill me!' she cried. 'Go ahead and kill me! But I can't live like that!'

"And it was then that we learned the truth about Italo Giuliano. That imitation gangster, that homely bookworm, that good-natured boy—he had become a notorious bandit! He was a fierce, clever criminal, famous for his bravery. He roamed all through Italy with a band of men who ate raw meat and picked at their body lice with stilettos. Already, he'd robbed ten banks, a dozen trucks, fifty mail shipments, and a hundred landowners.

"He's been doing it for two years!" said the girl. "Ever since he left this place the first time. Everyone in Sicily's heard of it, everywhere but here, in this know-nothing town, where no one's ever heard of anything!"

Esther and Ed

Esther Lee is a full-time clerical employee at Bethlehem Mines in the corporate headquarters at Bethlehem, Pa. In her "spare" time, Mrs. Lee is a school board director and serves on other community organizations involving church, government, education, youth, and minority groups.



Ed Skufca, a supervisor in the Railway Car Department of our Johnstown, Pa. plant is President of the 7th Ward Civic Association. One of their many community contributions is the volunteer ambulance corps that serves the 42,000 people of Johnstown.

and Rudy and Irma

Rudy Salinas, a bricklayer at our Los Angeles plant, works with several organizations that try to get Mexican-American youth and their parents and teachers working together—to prevent drop-outs, encourage post-high school education, and provide scholarship funds.



Irma Foote is a special assistant in our San Francisco Public Affairs Department. Each week during the school year, she devotes one night to helping Chinese youngsters with their homework, stressing reading, spelling, and pronunciation.

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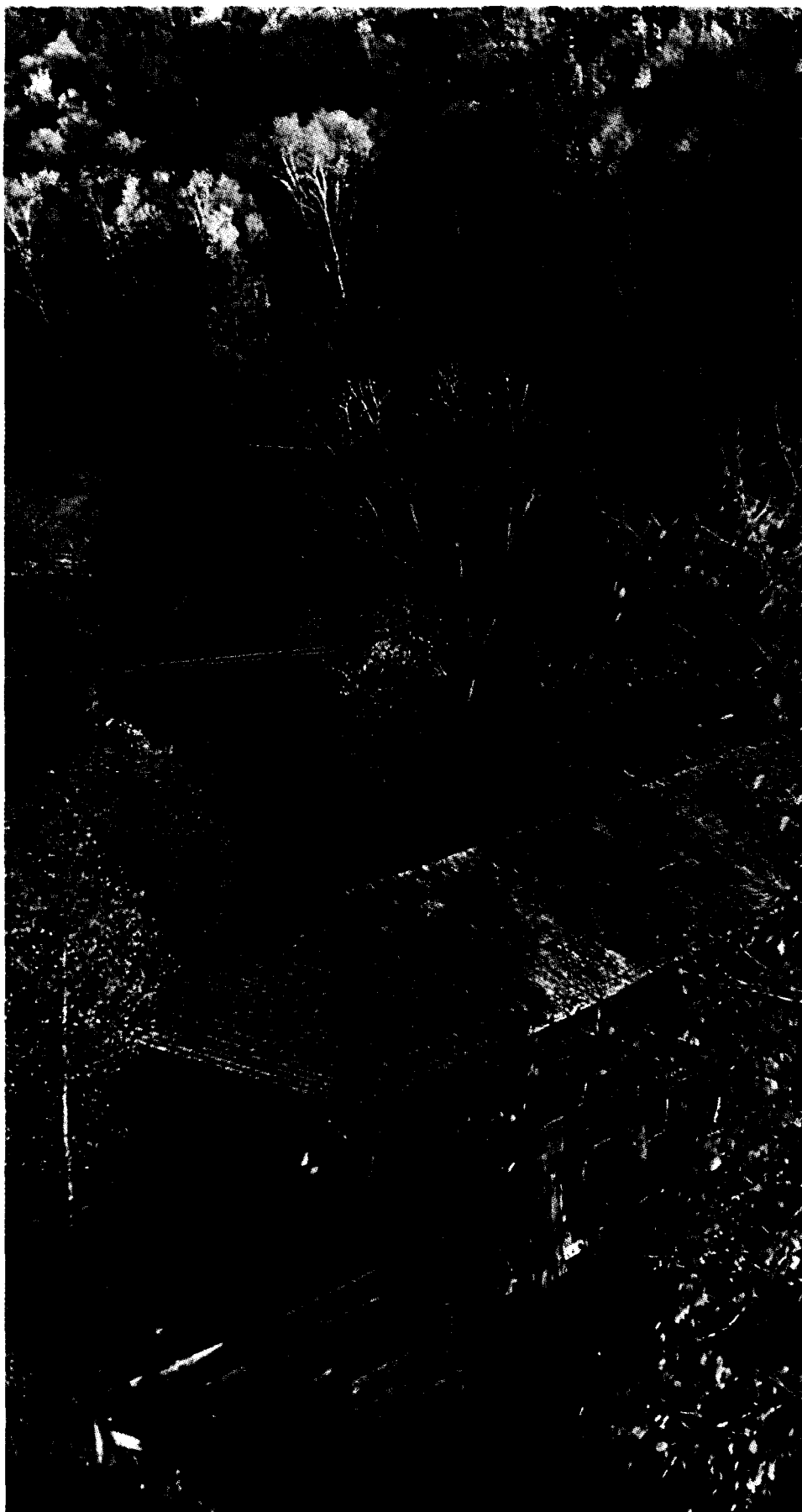
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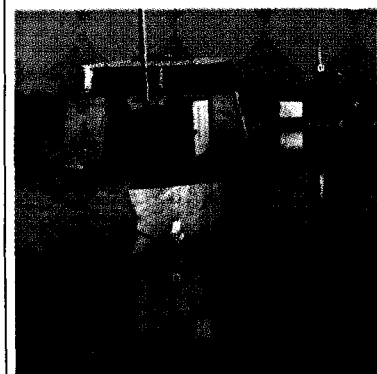
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The Bandit Was My Neighbor

"Italo's mother shrieked and fainted. I helped her to her feet, and took her home.

"Get me my mourning dress," she moaned. "I'll grieve for my son as if he were dead."

"Don't be silly," I told her. "Now everyone in town will worship him like Jesus. And now, he'll never die."

"I was right. From then on, the townspeople cross-examined every passing stranger for news of Italo Giuliano. Like their hero, ten years before, they stopped cars at the crossroads and pestered their drivers. Until then, the isolated villagers had viewed the outside world only as a source of rare luxuries, like tobacco. But suddenly, their bandit son had pushed them into modern life. For them, all history was the legend of Italo Giuliano: He robbed from the rich to feed the poor. He never killed, except in self-defense. He'd emerged unhurt from a thousand ambushes. He was such a beloved leader that men died out of loyalty to him. And, though he'd stolen more than two billion lire, he gave it all to charity, and lived as a poor man.

"The villagers began to regret the inhospitable treatment they'd given Italo during his last visit. After all, they said, it wasn't really such a sin for a great hero to have come courting a sweet local girl.

"In private, though, they wondered about the real reason for that visit. It was rumored that beautiful women were always offering themselves to the bandits. Why, then, did Italo come after a scrawny little thing like the Giuliano girl?

"The dishonored girl became a local celebrity. 'He did it for me,' she proclaimed proudly. 'He came back for love of me.'

"Italo Salvatore did everything possible to steal his sister's glory. 'No,' he'd say. 'He came back because of me. I was his old friend, and he seduced my sister to settle some old debt.'

"But I knew they were both wrong. For I alone knew the true reason for Italo's visit: He had known that I'd be at my window, night after night, watching him play with that skinny girl. And he wanted me to be ready when he returned again."

"And I was ready," says my grandmother, shutting her eyes for a moment, just as she does when she samples the parsley at the greengrocer's. "In the meantime, though, five years passed. Anthony inherited the bakery; we moved into our own house. And, with three children underfoot, I had no time to dream about bandits. Still, whenever I heard rumors of my old friend's exploits, I'd feel that strange, empty pain, like a missing tooth.

"But on the night Italo finally came, I wasn't thinking of him. I'd put the children to bed. Anthony was off at the café, praying for three aces. And I was sitting near the window, wondering how I could make a pound of tomatoes last a week.

"Then, suddenly, I heard him. 'Angela,' he whispered. 'I'm on the run. Take me in.'

"For a moment, as I looked down, I expected to see the old alley, with the Giuliano house across the way. But all I saw that night was Italo's face—shining, beautiful in the moonlight. All those awful cysts were gone, leaving small marks which made him look rough and handsome, like a wolf. He was sunburned; a pale scar ran across his forehead, down through that place where his eyebrows had once grown together. But it was not just his face which had changed. His whole expression was different. He had the look of a man who has won a staring contest with his own death.

"Italo," I said. "What's happened to you?"

"Nothing," he said. "Can I come in?"

"No," I told him. "Wait. I'll come out."

"That night, I followed Italo Giuliano to the meadow."

My grandmother is a modest woman, who would never dream of dwelling on the details of that night. But she sighs, and gazes off into the traffic in such a way that tears of envy spring to Mrs. Russo's eyes.

"The next morning," she continues, "I opened my eyes to see a golden bracelet on Italo's arm. Shining discs hung from the bracelet; each was engraved with a single word. 'Honor,' I read, 'Danger. Courage. Resourcefulness. Justice. Fidelity. Homesickness.'

"At last, the bracelet's jangling woke Italo. 'A bandit's life,' he said, pointing to the words on the discs. 'It wakes me, every morning.'

"I couldn't look at him. 'Fidelity,' I said. 'Homesickness. What does that mean?'

"It means I'll come back to you," he said.

"When?" I said.

"At least once before I die."

"But why should I believe you?"

"You know me," he said. "I never lie." Then he kissed me, got to his feet, and walked off across the meadow.

"I went home and lied. I told my husband Anthony that my stomach was bad, that I'd been sick all night in the fields. But I knew Italo hadn't lied. So I believed he'd come back, believed him so completely that I didn't even worry when the soldiers came looking for him.

"Although Mussolini had just come to power," says my grandmother, "none of my neighbors had ever heard of him. But once again, Italo Giuliano brought history to our village. One afternoon, the army rode into town, and ordered us to gather in the marketplace.

"Il Duce is your leader now" said the black-shirted captain. "And he has sworn to protect his people from the vicious mountain bandits who have been oppressing you. We know that Italo

Giuliano comes from this district, and we would appreciate your help in hunting him down.'

"The captain was an oily little man, who reminded me of my daughter's painted dolls. When my neighbors sneered at his request, I thought that he was probably well accustomed to such sneers.

"'Good luck to him,' said the villagers. 'He'll never get one of us to do that traitor's work.'

"But I was afraid that they were wrong. I was afraid that there was one who would.

"A few days later, my husband Anthony went to play cards, and came home with the news that the doors of the café had been boarded shut. Italo Salvatore had left home."

"And what happened then?" asks Mrs. Russo. "Did the two Italos meet? Did that no-good man betray his best friend?"

"Then," says my grandmother, "Anthony and I went to America. The war was reaching up into the mountains. My husband Anthony—always a practical man—knew that things were getting worse, and decided to sell the bakery and take us to some relatives in New York.

"On the night before we left, I went back to my old house. Looking through the window, I saw Mrs. Giuliano, kneeling before a statue of the Virgin, praying for her son's return.

"Don't worry,' I wanted to call to her. 'He'll be back.' And then, I remembered: when Italo Giuliano returned to the village, I would no longer be there.

"So Anthony and I came to Carmine Street. Here in America, life was so different, I sometimes thought that all my memories had happened to someone else. When I recalled that view from my window, it seemed like something in a dream. And so, ten years ago, when a stranger knocked on my door, I didn't think of Italo Giuliano. When a stranger knocks in America, you think of boys selling magazines; you don't expect bandits from the wilds of Sicily.

"On that day, I opened my door to find a dapper old gentleman, with a bristling red moustache. He was well dressed, in a black coat and a trim gray hat. But his hair was oddly streaked, as if he'd dyed and redyed it many times. His eyes were nervous. He reminded me of a fox.

"What can I do for you?" I said.

"Let me introduce myself," he answered.

"I haven't got much time," I told him. But already, he'd opened his fist. In his palm were two gold discs, engraved with the words 'Fidelity' and 'Homesickness.'

"Italo Giuliano!" I cried.

"I was his first lieutenant," said the man, fixing me with his fox's eyes.

"Come in," I said. "Come in. How is Italo?" I asked, as soon as he'd stepped inside. "What's he doing now? Is he still in the mountains, running with those bandits?"

"The man looked at me, puzzled. 'He's dead,' he said. 'He's been dead forty years.'

"No," I said. "No."

"Yes," he said. "I was there. Would you like me to tell you the story?" Then, without waiting for a reply, he sat down at the kitchen table, and began:

"In the spring of 1933," he said, "one of our spies returned to camp with the news that a lone man had been asking around for Italo Giuliano, searching for him everywhere.

"What sort of man?" Italo asked.

"A fool," replied the spy. "And probably an informer. He dresses like a gangster, like a teenage kid pretending to be a gangster. He wears an old leather jacket, with the collar turned up. He chain-smokes cigarettes, narrows his eyes, and mumbles out of the corner of his mouth."

"I know the man," said Italo Giuliano. "Go bring him back."

"We thought it odd that Italo should invite a stranger to our camp, at such a crucial and dangerous time. But Italo had never failed us before. He was the best leader who ever lived, and we trusted him completely.

"But when the stranger finally arrived, and we saw what kind of man he was, we began to wonder if something had impaired our chief's judgment.

"The stranger was a fool. His gangster ways were ludicrous. He had a soft body, a pretty face, two empty eyes. He reminded me of a child.

"But Italo greeted him like a long-lost brother. 'My oldest friend!' he cried. 'My oldest friend! What are you doing here?'"

"I want to join the bandits," said the other.

"They began to talk, right there in the midst of us. And gradually, we saw: they'd been childhood pals. And this pretty boy, this nobody—he'd been the leader. Of course, things had changed, but it took that fool some time to see it. At first, he still played the bigshot with Italo, teasing him, insulting him a little, saying that our captain wasn't nearly so ugly as he used to be.

"Italo didn't seem to mind. He couldn't have been nicer, or more hospitable. In fact, he told his friend that he could stay as long as he pleased, and showed him to a tent.

"When Italo returned, we gathered round him. 'Send him away,' we said. 'And let's get out of here right now. That man's a fool, he's too soft to ride with us. Besides, he's an informer if we've ever seen one. He can't stay here, we've got to escape, it's dangerous!'"

"If he's an informer," Italo said calmly, "let him go and inform. Meanwhile, my friend's arrival calls for a celebration. Go, get the wine we stole from the vineyards up north. Let's drink."

"Sick with uneasiness, we opened the wine. And that night, we drank until our fear of the informer no longer mattered."

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"Suddenly, the foxlike gentleman paused. He looked down at the ground, and wiped his moustache with the back of his hand.

"Madame," he said softly. "You know the rest of the story yourself. The next morning, we were attacked by an army battalion. Everyone was killed, including Italo Giuliano. In the crossfire, the soldiers accidentally shot their own informer. I alone survived to carry out my leader's wish, to find you, and give you his friendliest regards."

"For a moment," says my grandmother, "I couldn't speak. Then, I looked at my visitor, and began to scream. 'Of course I know the story,' I screamed. 'The brave outlaw, betrayed by his best friend. I've heard it a thousand times. And that's why I don't believe a single word you say.

"Because Italo Giuliano knew that story too. He'd read it as a boy, in his books. And he would never have walked into such an obvious trap. He knew Italo Salvatore had a hundred reasons for betraying him. He would never have gone along with it, and died such a ridiculous death.

"Besides, I knew you were lying from the beginning. You said that Italo called the stranger his oldest friend. But Italo Giuliano would never have said that. For *I* was his oldest friend!"

"The gentleman stood up. 'I saw it with my own eyes,' he said.

"You saw nothing!" I said. "You're an impostor, seeking charity. You've come here with lies and stolen souvenirs, looking for some kind of pity."

"If Italo didn't die in Sicily," said the man, "then where is he?"

"He isn't really dead!" I cried, and slammed the door behind him."

Mrs. Russo takes a deep breath. "Do you really think he's still alive?" she asks. "He'd be old now, like us."

"He promised he'd come back," says my grandmother. "I pray for my husband Anthony among the dead souls. But I pray for Italo Giuliano among the living."

Once again, my grandmother gazes off into the uptown traffic, peering at each passing taxi—as if, at any moment, Italo Giuliano might come riding up, in the back seat of a cab.

"What I want to know," says Mrs. Russo, "is this: why did he become a bandit? Was it his love for you, or his friendship with Italo Salvatore, his homeliness, his reading? Was it all that mistreatment he took as a boy?"

"Those might have been his reasons," replies my grandmother, "but I do not think they were. For, with a man like Italo, there are no simple answers. Mrs. Russo," she sighs, "tell me: was there ever another man on this earth like Italo Giuliano?"

Mrs. Russo hesitates for several minutes. "Your husband Anthony," she says at last, "was a very good man."

Now the truth of the matter is this. For twenty years, Mrs. Russo was in love with my grandmother's husband Anthony. Like her friend, she is a modest woman; so she confined her passion to a few hesitant waves from her window across the courtyard. But once each year, at the Knights of Columbus Ball, she and Anthony danced one waltz. And that is what Mrs. Russo remembers.

And so, every time my grandmother tells the story of Italo Giuliano, Mrs. Russo hears it as the story of her husband Anthony. Whenever she hears it, she understands why that unhappy look came into Anthony's eyes as they waltzed to the orchestra's sad, slow tunes. She understands that it was the look of a man whose wife is married to the memory of a bandit.

Personally, Mrs. Russo couldn't care less about Italo Giuliano. To her, he is no more important than the drunks who stumble across the traffic island, begging for quarters.

And that is the true story of bandit lovers—of men like Italo Giuliano, Cartouche, Robin Hood, Lampiao, and Wu Sung:

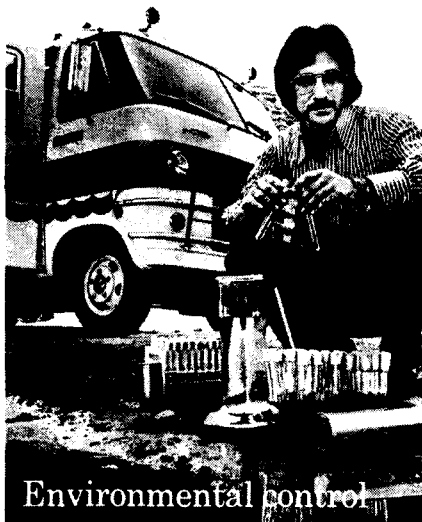
They never really die. But they can only really live in the hearts of women like me and my grandmother. □

SEPTEMBER LANDSCAPE

Olive-green, sky-blue, gravel-brown,
With a floor of tumbled locusts,
And along the country lane
Isabel dances dressed in red
Erect, thinking aloud,
Framed against sudden cloud
And its bold promise of much-needed rain.

by Robert Graves

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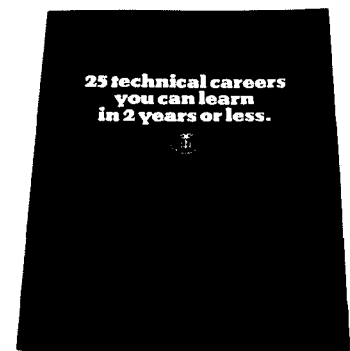
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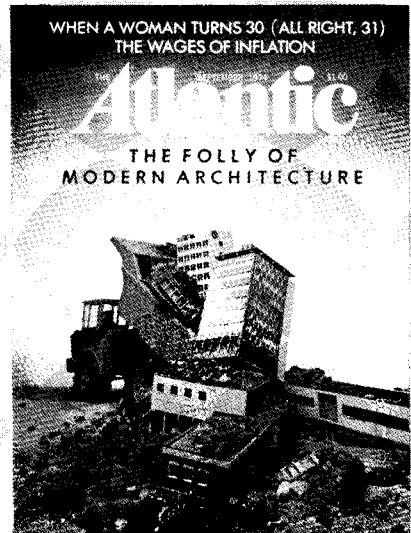


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HOW TO PLAY SECOND BASE

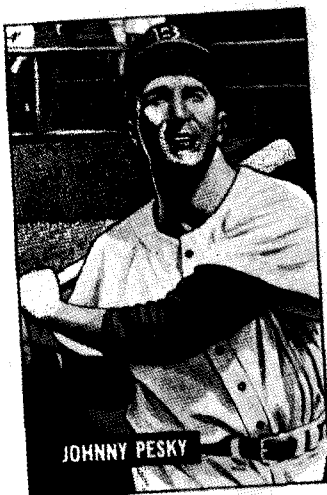
by Laurence Sheehan

“Hey, kid, you’re gonna miss it!”
Of course I was; no one had
to broadcast it.

Second base is the most important position in baseball. Nobody realizes. A lot of coaches don’t even bother to tell their second basemen the first thing about the job. They don’t think second base is worth the effort.

The unfortunate name of second base is partly to blame. It just sounds like a hand-me-down. I think the ill-fated manager Joe McCarthy of the Boston Red Sox also once said something like second base is neither first nor third. That was the situation when I was playing for Centerville School, and I doubt if it’s improved much since then, not at Centerville or in the majors.

Why is second base so important? Because when an easy grounder or a high pop-up is hit to that position, and you kick it away, or misjudge it and let it bounce on your head, the whole team gets demoralized. The shortstop comes over and says, Too bad the school bus didn’t clip you this morning. The first baseman slaps his leg and laughs. The pitcher gives you the finger in front of everybody. Of course there may not be that many people at the game, so the public humiliation won’t count for much. Centerville hardly ever drew a crowd because it



was always in last place in its division, thanks in part to slight miscalculations by the second baseman.

I got my little sister Evie to come a lot when games were played at Legion Field in our neighborhood. But she didn’t understand baseball. She would see me strike out on three consecutive pitches, or get run through by a steaming grounder. But she wouldn’t find such happenings interesting enough to report to our parents. I’d have to tell them myself at supper.

You might say that for Evie my baseball failings went in one eye and out the other. She was a lousy fan. I sometimes wondered why I had her come to the games at all, which I did starting when I made the team in sixth grade and got my uniform. I don’t think she even knew what number I wore (9—The Thumper’s own!). Anyway, if it weren’t for the bubble gum my black pal Herman kept giving her, she probably would have stopped coming long before she finally did. Herman played third. She would chew gum or eat an apple or orange from home, and watch out that no one stole our gloves when we were at bat, but basically Evie paid no attention to what was going on. She usually sat on the opposing team’s bench, to my great embarrassment. It was closer to the water fountain.

Back to second base now. There are tips that can make anybody play this position better and I’d like to pass them along.

By the way, I didn’t mean to imply I minded my teammates groaning and hooting at my errors. I mean I minded, but I understood. And basically we had a close-knit infield. It wasn’t any dream infield, such as the Bosox built around the great Bobby Doerr and Johnny Pesky in the same years I was at Centerville, but we had a pretty good team feeling. Erwin, our regular pitcher, would put up with four or five errors in one inning before going to the finger. Lover Boy, the first baseman, would laugh at errors and kid a lot, but actually he didn’t care where the ball went or even who

won. His mind was always on his girlfriends who were waiting for him up in the nearly empty stands. Bert, our team captain at short, would come over after I'd let one go through my legs, and say, "All right, let's get back in this game now." And of course Herman, who never made an error himself over at third, would not get upset by anything I did. Or anybody did. He was the coolest cucumber on the squad.

Not even State Street's Butch Mendoza, the division's Home Run King and number-one razzler, could get through to Herman. We had no regular coaches on the bases. Older players on each team did the job. Mendoza liked to do it for State Street. He'd coach first base and rib Lover Boy about his shaggy hair and his white cleats, and Lover Boy would nod and smile, probably not even hearing Butch's taunts, too busy dreaming about those girls of his up in the stands and about his plans for them all after the game. When Butch coached third he liked to rib Herman about his color. "Hey, boy, where's your watermelon today?" he'd say, or "How come you're not picking cotton this week?" At that time blacks were few and far between in our town, no matter what grammar school you went to, and Butch probably thought of Herman as a foreigner. The important thing is, Herman paid no attention to Butch and never did make an error before his eyes.

I'll spare the outfielders on Centerville. Like most outfielders they were hotshots, and I suppose because they managed to get more hits and runs than anyone else, they had a right to parade around out there and editorialize on every move the infielders made.

Now, then, the hardest play to handle is the infield fly. I say anytime a ball goes higher than it goes farther, it is going to be a son of a gun to catch. In my playing days, half the time I wouldn't even know when one of those high pops was entering my territory. I'd need to hear Lover Boy call over, "Hey, little man, here comes trouble!"

Anyway, you've got to get set. A good thing is to get your feet in motion. And bend your neck back far enough so your eyes see more than the brim of the baseball cap. Everything about school uniforms is fine except the brims on the caps. They are made for adult heads, and if you stand 4 feet 3 and weigh 75 pounds, the hat will be like an awning on your forehead. The only thing you'll be able to see without any strain is your feet, which as I said should be in motion anyway—as you commence dancing into position to make a stab at the catch.

Of course, once you get your head tilted back far enough so you can see past the brim of your cap, you risk being temporarily blinded by the sun.

Even on cloudy days it is possible for the sun to come out just at the crucial instant and make you lose sight of the damn ball, assuming you ever saw it in the first place.

Another bad thing about the high fly is that it gives you too much time to think. Like the drowning man, a ten-year-old tends to experience all the important moments in his life while waiting for a baseball to drop. Moments such as when you saw your name on the Centerville School baseball roster for the first time.

To tell the truth, the reason I got to play second base for Centerville for three years in a row is that my growth was stunted at the time, and provided I didn't swing at the ball when I was up to bat, opposing pitchers tended to walk me. My strike zone was about the size of a civics workbook. If I waited out the pitchers, I could count on getting on base almost every time.

Not that I wouldn't go for the hit once in a while. I would pretend to miss the signal telling me to wait for the walk that would invariably come from the third-base coach when I was up. The signal was always the same: doff cap, scratch left knee, blow nose in hanky, in that order. By the end of the season every team in the division knew all our coaching signals, but it was too confusing to try to change them.

Anyway, sometimes I would just ignore the signal and go for the hit. Each time I missed the ball, of course, the third-base coach would slam his cap on the ground or throw his hanky down, mad as can be. The opposing team's catcher would grin and hold the ball up in front of my eyes for my inspection before tossing it back to the mound. I would ignore all this and just dig in deeper with my cleats and take a couple of fierce practice swings. Digging in was itself a problem because the batter's box was furrowed over from other stances. Following the example of The Thumper and Vern Stephens and other Beantown sluggers, the boys in our division liked to get a really firm hold on the planet when at bat. They would dig and kick with their cleats like dogs tearing up the ground after peeing, and the result would be a set of gullies in the batter's box among which I was supposed to find a place to stand. I had the narrow stance that comes with a 4-foot, 3-inch frame, and sometimes I had one foot on a hillside and the other in a gully. No wonder my average was low.



That's really part of the story of how Herman and I got to be friends—we were built the same. We were the only two to make the team in sixth grade. Herman made it on his talent in spite of his size and I made it on my size in spite of my talent. In a way we came up together from the minors. Also we tended to sit right near each other in classrooms because our last names started with the same initial and in those days everything was done alphabetically, from choking on cod-liver-oil pills to taking cover in the lavatory during practice A-bomb attacks.

Now about the high fly. Your own thoughts are not the only distractions when you're looking for a ball somewhere up there in the blinding blue infinity of outer space. People are chattering all around you. Once I heard my sister call to me, "Hey, I'm going to play on the swings now, OK?" Another time, when we were playing State Street, Butch Mendoza hit a real

rainmaker somewhere in my neighborhood. Running down the line to first, Butch had plenty of time on his hands, so he hollered, "Hey, kid, you're gonna miss it, you're gonna miss it!" Of course I was; nobody had to broadcast it.

State Street always won the division and usually went on to win the town title by beating the leader of the other division. They were tough boys at State Street. If they didn't beat you in the

game, they'd beat you up afterwards. A lot of the State Street players had stayed back in grades a couple of times, which gave them the edge of experience over the boys at Centerville. I don't know how old Butch was. I did hear once that when he finally graduated from State Street he was eligible for the draft. That may have been an exaggeration, but no question, he was big. He would pole tremendous flies that our outfielders wouldn't even bother running for. There was no proper fence at Legion Field such as they have at Fenway Park, and after a certain point, say 250 feet out, the field slanted sharply into an old cemetery and it was the devil finding the ball if it got that far.

Butch and one other boy in our division were the only ones who could reach the cemetery, so it really wasn't a problem. The other boy played for Mount Carmel but I don't remember his name. He

missed a lot of the games, anyway, because he often had to work on his family's farm after school. Mount Carmel was in the town's last rural section and boasted a number of hayseeds on its squad, boys with eyebrows that grew together and hard bones.

The only other good team in our division was Spring Glen. It always amazed me how the rich families who lived in the Spring Glen section of town could produce so many ballplayers. As far as I could tell, Ted Williams, Dom DiMaggio, Walt Dropo, Birdie Tebbetts, Billy Goodman, and the rest all came from humble backgrounds. On that basis I used to think there was some connection between rough childhoods and good batting averages, which is why I sometimes wished my own house would burn down, to give me an edge.

My final advice on high pops is to play them on the first bounce. Just let the ball drop and say you thought the infield fly rule was in effect. Of course the infield fly rule is in effect only when two or more players are on base, and then the batter is automatically out. Actually, though, high infield flies are never hit to the second baseman when the rule happens to apply. That is one of the unfair parts a second baseman learns to live with.

I could go into what kind of glove to buy and how to keep it oiled and such, but you probably know all that. Anyway the glove doesn't make the ballplayer. When I was named to the team in sixth grade, I talked my folks into buying me a nice new glove with a big web and all, in honor of the miracle. But the only thing I ever caught in it was a cold—that's what Lover Boy always said. In comparison, Herman's glove looked like it had come off the world's last buffalo. It had no padding and hardly any webbing and one of the fingers was always coming unstitched. But Herman nabbed everything that came anywhere near third base.

I guess Evie knew Herman's glove was magical even though she hardly watched the action, because she would hold it in her lap for him between innings. Mine she just kept handy. Herman would pay her off in bubble gum for the service.

Now for grounders. I used to practice fielding grounders all winter by flinging a ball against the concrete wall in our basement. It drove my parents batty and scarred the patio furniture in storage and worst of all it taught me how to catch only one kind of grounder—the grounder that comes directly at you and bounces into your glove at knee level. In three years of play in our division, this particular type of ground ball was never once hit to my position.

The key thought at second is not to catch the grounder, anyway, but to stop it. That keeps the right fielder off your back and if you manage to find the ball after it's bounced off your knee or chest, you still might be able to get it to first in time for the out. A danger here is to get so excited



How to Play Second Base

about actually getting the ball in your bare hand that you send it sailing over the first baseman's head and over by the swings. So concentrate on the throw to first during infield warm-up at the start of every inning. This is when the first baseman throws a few grounders to the other infielders to loosen them up. Lover Boy was always careful to give me a grounder underhanded, so I would be more likely to catch it and not have to trot out into shallow center to get the ball back again.

Maybe even more important than handling pops and stopping ground balls with your chin if necessary is the second baseman's role in boosting team spirit. A lot of boosting comes in the form of infield chatter in support of the pitcher. "Come on you kid, come on you babe," is a proven morale-booster. So are "No hitter no hitter up there" and "Chuck it in there, baby."

I was practically the psychological cornerstone of the Centerville infield because Erwin, our regular pitcher, was left-handed. In the course of winding up, especially when there were men on base—as there usually were—Erwin would always pause briefly and be forced to look in my direction, as a southpaw, before collecting his energies for the assault on the strike zone. Sometimes he had a faintly disgusted look which seemed to say, "Well, I suppose you're getting ready to make another error." But I knew the importance of giving him confidence and I would stare right back and say, "Come on you kid come on you babe no hitter no hitter."

Erwin sucked on Life Savers during a game, which I don't approve of for a second baseman. If the second baseman gets knocked down by a runner, or happens to trip of his own accord, with a Life Saver in his mouth, it is quite possible he will get the candy jammed in his throat. I chewed gum and recommend the same. Chewing gum keeps your mouth from getting dry as a resin bag on those hot, dusty days when baseball was meant to be played, and it relaxes your jaw muscles, which are the first to freeze up under tension.

Covering the bag properly is another important duty. I never had much practice taking throws from the catcher, to put out base stealers, because in such cases the Centerville catchers either threw the ball way into the outfield or hit poor Erwin with it as he tried to get out of the way. I did handle throws from the outfield a lot. Naturally our outfielders had to show off their powerful throwing arms so, on an attempted double, say, I would face two means of extinction: (1) breaking my hand on the hard throw from the field, or (2) getting run over from behind by the base runner.

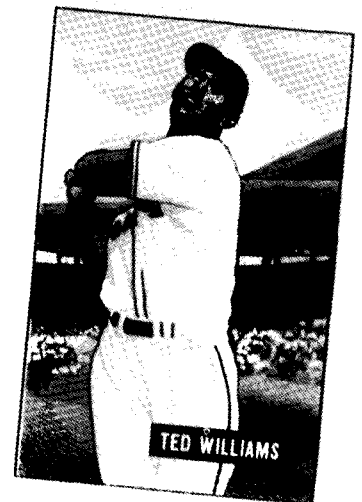
Actually I never got spiked or knocked down by runners, but there were many close calls. By far the most dangerous man on base in the division was Butch Mendoza, as you might have guessed by what I've mentioned about him already. Once

Butch knocked Herman on his ass coming into third. Right away we had to bring in a young kid at Herman's position who was almost as bad as I was out there. I remember Lover Boy saying, "My, my, we are now fielding a hole at second and a sieve at third!"

Herman was nowhere near the base and Butch should have been called out for running outside his normal course. He deliberately picked Herman off because of Herman's color and maybe even more because of Herman's indifference to Butch's many taunts. He should have been called out, but even the umpires were afraid of Butch Mendoza in those days. He was three times Herman's height and twice his weight, I'd guess. So Herman got carted off by Bert and Erwin and me, wind knocked out of him, and as it turned out, one arm busted.

In the meantime, I remember, Evie got up from the State Street bench, where she was sitting, naturally, and hit Butch with what was left of the apple she'd been chomping on. Got him in the face with her apple core after he'd crossed home plate. She turned and ran toward home and Butch was too surprised and out of breath anyway to do much about it. He just looked confused. I felt like catching up with Evie and buying her a Popsicle for trying to avenge Herman as she had done. I guess I knew, even as I helped cart off Herman, who was chewing his bubble gum like crazy at the time, to keep from crying probably—I guess I knew Butch had done something he would be ashamed of in later years, provided he ever stopped to think about it. And little Evie had done something she'd never stop to think about, because she was at that age when you can deal with villains cleanly.

In any case I couldn't have walked out on Centerville even though we were losing by about 12 to 3 at the time. We got Herman settled down and took the field again and finished the last two or three innings. I think State Street got a couple more runs off us, to rub it in. We never got on base again, but that didn't make any difference—we stuck it out. That's really about the last thing I wanted to pass along about the job of playing second base, whether you're winning or losing, or making five errors per game, or seeing one of your teammates get a bad break, or losing your only fan. Stick it out. That's what second base is all about. □



LIFE & LETTERS

PRAISE GOD, FROM WHOM ALL BALL BEARINGS FLOW

by Richard Todd

Once, in adolescence, a bookish friend of mine said, "Of course there's a God. Otherwise, how would machines work?" I thought this was a witty remark, witty at the expense of machines, their dull mysteries, the people who cared too much about them. Now I am not sure that my friend didn't mean something more dense. As it happened he became a wanderer, a mystic of sorts, a man of drugs and a communard, and—anomalously—a passionate mechanic. Perhaps, though, his interest in machines is not anomalous at all, and perhaps he was feeling in his teens intimations of the sort of technological theology that is explored in Robert M. Pirsig's strange, strong book, *ZEN AND THE ART OF MOTORCYCLE MAINTENANCE* (Morrow, \$7.95).

Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance, published earlier this year, has already been much praised: overpraised, I fear, though even aware of the danger, I may overpraise it too. George Steiner in *The New Yorker* likened it to *Moby Dick*, apologizing for the "prodigious comparison" but insisting that it was often appropriate. In its themes and methods the book does connect with that and with other monuments of American literature, without seeming to be derivative of them. It is, on the other hand, roughly made, ill proportioned: inspired and banal by turns. And moving. Why that last word should apply, as it does, with such force is a question to pursue.

Certain rudimentary questions come first, and they are uncustomarily hard to answer. What is this book? It specifically disclaims being a novel, calling itself instead "An Inquiry Into Values." If judged by fictional standards it would suffer for most of the way, but by the end no other word but "novel" is large enough to encompass what occurs. Yet I can't follow the proper convention of referring to the "narrator"—it will have to be "Pirsig": "I" in this book generally means "I."

What happens? That's easier to say, at least on one level. A father and his eleven-year-old son travel west from Minneapolis to the Pacific by motorcycle. They are accompanied partway by two friends, a man and his wife. The couple never achieves much identity, but that's all right with Pirsig, who reminds you that he's no novelist: "I suppose if I were a novelist rather than a Chautauqua orator I'd try to 'develop the characters' of John and Sylvia and Chris with action-packed scenes that would also reveal 'inner meanings' of Zen and maybe Art and maybe even Motorcycle Maintenance. That would be quite a novel, but for some reason I don't feel quite up to it."

And what's this about "Chautauqua orator"? Much of the book consists of set-piece lectures on philosophical topics, which the author wryly styles "Chautauquas." The boy and man ride wordlessly across the West, and beneath the cycle's noise the man inwardly

drones; speculates; and instructs, amuses, and perplexes the reader.

The first lesson of the book, and a theme that persists, has to do with investing technology with a spiritual dimension, what I called a moment ago technological theology. Pirsig insists that if you are to look for universal meaning, you can't look solely, or even primarily, at what is called the natural world. Sparkplugs no less than seeds are repositories of divinity. "The Buddha, the Godhead, resides quite as comfortably in the circuits of a digital computer or the gears of a cycle transmission as he does at the top of a mountain or in the petals of a flower. To think otherwise is to demean the Buddha—which is to demean oneself." Pirsig preaches the need for reverence toward our machines as a route to reverence itself. The book contains odd, small evocations of the delicacy of machined metal and the priestliness of the mechanic's craft. Pirsig mocks those who take an attitude of reflexive disdain toward the mechanical world. In an interlude away from the cycle at an elegant Montana retreat, Pirsig takes off on his host's disgruntlement over a set of instructions for assembling a rotisserie. Pirsig quotes a line from instructions that accompanied an imported bicycle: "Assembly of Japanese bicycle require great peace of mind." That's only half a joke, for Pirsig: a sense of connection, the de-objectification of the machine, care and sentience in seemingly "mechanical"

tasks can ally art and technology. "This divorce of art from technology is completely unnatural. It's just that it's gone on so long you have to be an archeologist to find out where the two separated. Rotisserie assembly is actually a long-lost branch of sculpture, so divorced from its roots by centuries of intellectual wrong turns that just to associate the two sounds ludicrous."

And who is this fellow who would hold the world together? Over the course of 400 pages we learn about some aspects of his life no more than we would from a résumé. He has lived in Nevada, Montana, Mexico; traveled in Asia. Trained in science, took a degree in journalism. Has worked at various jobs, industrial advertising, for one. Is now a technical writer. Marital status: married. (His unnamed wife never appears.) In manner: gentle, calm, and in a rural way both long-winded and laconic. He may be in the midst of writing a great novel, but he is determinedly, persuasively, an unliterary man. The book's title, of course, is a "literary allusion" but a highly nonchalant one. (Unlike its namesake, Pirsig's book has little to do with Zen.) Although Pirsig reports extensively on his reading, fiction seems to have meant nothing to him. He uses the word "arty" as a pejorative, and will speak of others with tolerant disapproval as "those characters."

A folksy man on vacation with his son, a man who just happens to have a head full of ideas. The impression persists for only a short time. After a few pages we learn that he is a man in flight from a desperate past. He has been obsessed, and he threatens to be obsessed again. Once in his life he has ended up catatonic, in a pool of his own urine, a cigarette burning into his fingers, his self drifting away: "Then even 'he' disappears, and only the dream of himself remains with himself in it." What follows is hospitalization: electroshock therapy that obliterates much of his former personality.

The Pirsig we meet—though full of energy, able to ride all day, alert to the fleeting landscape, and eager to pursue his didactic theories—is in some ways a convalescent man. He proceeds through life with a secret gingerliness, just as he proceeds up

a mountain when he and his son pause in their trip for some backpacking. He takes each step as it comes, not daring to think of the top. He is horrified by the thought of succumbing to the questing activity that carried him once before into madness. His fear and his powers of control emerge quietly but resonantly: "Mountains should be climbed with as little effort as possible and without desire." Considerable terror hides in that casual sentence.

It was once desire—a driven, Faustian compulsion to know all, a hunger for absolutism—that drove him insane. Fragments of memory, attenuated by electroshock, are triggered by parts of the countryside which Pirsig has traveled before, and gradually, chillingly, the ghostly autobiographical tale takes over the book.

The man who formerly used his name was, Pirsig suggests, a wholly different person. They say at the mental hospital after treatment that you have a "new personality"; Pirsig reasonably argues that you cannot "have" a new personality without being a new person. To his old self Pirsig gives the name "Phaedrus," after the figure in the Platonic dialogue. Phaedrus has been buried, but his ghost (a recurrent image) inhabits the book and chases Pirsig and his son, Chris, who himself is showing signs of stress.

The story of Phaedrus' mental collapse is the story of a man who took the Western world too seriously. Rationality is the engine of Western civilization, and Phaedrus was determined to become its mechanic, to disassemble reason and put it back together again, to see how it worked. He was a young man of measurable brilliance—an IQ of 170—and boundless naïveté, and an eerie detachment from the social contexts in which he found himself, from the world of human feeling.

His education was a series of disillusionments. Science promised truth but delivered ambiguity, relativity. In any experimental situation, not one but an infinite number of hypotheses might explain the data. He sought after the source, the authority for reason, but he was chasing a chimera. "The ghost he pursued was the ghost that under-

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**THE ADVENTURES OF GOD
IN HIS SEARCH
FOR THE BLACK GIRL**

by **Brigid Brophy**
\$7.95 at your bookstore

LITTLE, BROWN

lies all of technology, all of modern science, all of Western thought. It was the ghost of rationality itself."

Phaedrus intuits the limits of rationality, but lacks a language to describe what territory might lie beyond. Instead he seizes on a single word, which is charged with the burden of embodying all that he seeks: wholeness, form, the object of the religious impulse, and (though he seems not to realize it) the ordinary passion that is absent from his life. He chooses his word and gives it a capital letter: Quality. And what a word: debased by American usage ("Shop at the Sign of the Big Q"), it is itself an emblem of Phaedrus' detachment from social reality.

The rest is a descent into madness. He is compelled to awaken others to the truth he feels he can contain within his word. He becomes a student of philosophy at the University of Chicago, but he is Ahab in graduate school, devouring and destroying texts in search of what he already knows too well. This section of the book is murky and troubling, depending as it does on misreadings of books which Pirsig fails to correct, and on heated personal quarrels that almost surely existed only in Phaedrus' mind but are reported as though they had occurred in fact. However, his final slipping-away into darkness and solitary ecstasy is scarifyingly described.

On the other side of the asylum's devastating electricity, Pirsig becomes a different sort of philosopher. If Phaedrus had been a romantic Platonist, Pirsig becomes a level-headed Aristotelian: "Aristotle is the eternal motorcycle mechanic who prefers the 'many' [to the 'one']. I myself am pretty much Aristotelian in this sense, preferring to find the Buddha in the quality of facts around me." His method now is inductive and restrained. Tuning his motorcycle is like going to church. Watching a skilled and careful welder, or solving a complex analytical problem, opens up his mind to a controlled apprehension of the "Quality" Phaedrus had monomaniacally sought.

But as Pirsig talks on, one feels a certain ominous hollowness to his arguments. The technological optimism, for instance, that is crucial to

his world view is not persuasive. At bad moments Pirsig can lapse into chamber of commerce talk, reminding the reader that life in an industrial society is superior to that in a primitive one, and that "a technology that produces debris can find, and is finding, ways of disposing of it without ecological upset." Well, maybe, but it is not obvious that because technology has brought us to someplace better it might not lead us further, to someplace worse.

Even when he is at his most telling on the subject of technology, Pirsig seems to forget some essential truths. He misses, for example, the fact that individual salvation may spell collective doom: the now familiar "tragedy of the commons." He misses, too, the gratuitous, wanton symbolic power a man with a machine may wield, his ability to influence the world around him beyond his natural powers of articulation and apart from his social and political affiliations. Should all the residents of my town become devoted motorcyclists, no matter with what epiphanous love we replace our points and plugs, we will shatter the peace of Sunday afternoon, annoy one another, and each will hate the place that all have created.

What is absent from Pirsig's arguments is what is absent from the life he describes: a developed sense of the inevitable mutuality of experience. It is with true dismay that the reader realizes that the battle he describes in the past is being reenacted in the present, and that the outcome is by no means certain.

Its locus becomes the boy, Chris, who has stared for miles at his father's back, and walked behind him up mountain trails. They have not had an easy time. Chris is moody and withdrawn, his father desperately unable to engage him. Pirsig has a rich vocabulary for the innards of a motorcycle but can find few words for the interior of his son's mind. He portrays their miscommunications affectingly. Outside a California motel one morning Pirsig sees some slugs on the ground, they interest him, and he picks one up and shows it to Chris. "It moves slowly like a snail across a leaf. He has no comment." The sad formality of that phrase. The boy throughout is seen in terms of externalities.

Achingly you follow the struggle. They sit in hostile silence on a hillside in California. Pirsig cannot manage the boy, and it becomes clear that he cannot much longer manage himself. He tries to send the boy away. "Chris, you're looking at a father who was insane for a long time, and is close to it again." To the reader he adds, "And not just close anymore. It's here. The bottom of the ocean." As the boy himself wails, a noise like a siren is heard approaching; it comes from the gears of a truck: even the technological world that has been his solace is coming apart.

He cannot save himself, but astonishingly, the boy can. The child blurts out the curiosity he has repressed for years about his father's illness, and he at length asks if his father was truly insane. To this the father instinctively says, No. An instinctive and a wise lie, since what both need is not more "truth" but some faith, which Chris now provides by saying "I knew it," a phrase that reverberates in the man's head and buoys up both of them: it is the first moment in which we see Pirsig successfully inventing a shared life. The permanence of this achievement is a problem for Pirsig and the reader, but its momentary importance is undeniable.

Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance is a bold book. Its author disregards the risks of humiliation and speaks without the aid of a social support system (without a professorial chair or a title, not even the title "novelist") about the largest issues. The issues are ones that have inhabited our culture and which now consume more and more of our conscious life: how to think about the hated and beloved machines . . . how to blunt the force of on-rushing linear thought . . . how to escape the traps of "individuality" without obliterating the self. And in his own confessional story he dares to render more than he fully understands. High intelligence, high intention, and deeply flawed self-knowledge: ingredients of tragedy, and so they have been in the life this book recounts, but they have also produced a self-sacrificial document of a strength that is not commonly found in works of more deliberate art.

CALANGUTE, GOA

by Linda Shah

There are no advertisements for the houses that the fishermen in Calangute, Goa, rent to tourists, not in the *International Herald Tribune*, or the *Times* of India, or even the local Panjim daily. It is only a matter of word of mouth, and the result partially of Indian hospitality. Yet all along the miles of sun-lit beaches of this former Portuguese colony on the west coast of India, an abundance of cottages, bungalows, even rambling old mansions, are vacant and available for an entire season.

My husband and I had come down to Goa from Bombay by overnight boat and had traversed the state from jungle ridges of the interior to the plains of rice paddies and the river city of Panjim, where the Mandavi Hotel is gracious and luxurious and still bears signs in Portuguese. When we discovered the fishing colony of Calangute, however, with its slow, dreamy life circulating about the running of the fish and the changing of the tides, and its hamlets of tile-roof houses available for rental, we remained for the entire winter.

It was early December, and mackerel, the really profitable fish, had not yet begun to run. They were sold for use as fertilizer and company trucks came up from Goa's principal port, Vasco da Gama, to get them. The rest of the year there was only enough fish for personal consumption, but before Christmas, with the gentler sea and complete lack of rain, the ocean was plentiful with a thousand varieties, from porpoises to shellfish.

Every day we were visited by a continuous parade of minstrels, magicians, dancing bears, monkey shows, merchants, and tourists from every part of India and Europe. We had merely to sit beneath the red-tiled overhang that shaded the wraparound veranda of our house, and wait. Banana, orange, and mango salesmen poured fruit through our open windows. Potters roped in clay pots and metal dishes, cloth merchants bearing yards of printed cot-

ton, woven carpets, and grass mats—all went through the village on weekly rounds. Children brought fresh eggs every morning, and the milk girl came at sunrise with water buffalo milk still warm in the clay pot she carried on her head.

From the sea, the wives of the fishermen who were our neighbors brought the prized catch of the day: baby sharks, pots of mackerel, shrimp a foot long, lobsters and crabs which we cooked over logs and dried coconut leaves on the stone slab that served as a stove. The dhobi, or washerman, collected our laundry, washed it at the well, and hung it to dry over the tarpaper roof of his hut a few yards from our house. He spent the rest of the day smoking a hookah, moving only as the shade of the tallest coconut tree on the beach changed its position.

Our house perched in its own grove of coconut trees on a sandy bluff just up from the ocean. Unlike most of the houses of the fishermen it was not left behind by the Portuguese, but had recently been built by a lady from Calcutta for tourist rental. Its white stucco walls still bore a gleaming coat of paint and it had not yet been weathered by seasons of summer monsoons.

Renting was a simple matter. As soon as we arrived at the Tourist Resort Hotel, a spartan, government-run structure of neat, terraced rooms, and the only modern hotel in Calangute, we let it be known that we were interested in renting a house. We were shown old Portuguese mansions stuffed with carved wooden furniture, pianos, glassy-eyed heads of wild boar, icons of St. Francis, and wedding photos of three generations. Several fishermen offered to let us share their cottages, and there was even an abandoned monastery, a maze of monks' cells, inner courtyards, and terraced walks on a cliff at the end of the beach. It was a renovator's dream but it was accessible only at low tide.

The previous tenant of our little white house was Salvador, an artist

from the Canary Islands. He had slashed a mural across the living-room wall, a Plasticine collage of 125 portraits, representing a chronological Freudian trip through the artist's mind and Hermann Hessean images of India. He had also painted the front door and shutters vibrant red edged with silver, and although our only furniture was a small wooden desk and a few straight-back chairs, the living room, with its cathedral ceiling of red clay tiles, its exposed mango wood rafters, and its cool tiled floors, needed nothing more to be a comfortable and striking home. Every day we filled huge clay amphoras with armloads of mango and tamarind and cashew blossoms. We hung woven mats at the doors and spread our carpets over the two jute rope beds in the bedroom.

For 250 rupees a month (thirty-five dollars) we were given the five-room house, its coconut grove, a nearby well, an unobstructed view of the ocean, and two twelve-year-old children to help us with chores. Josephina drew water from the well, balancing it in clay urns on her hips without ruffling the cotton of her dirndl dresses which all the Goan girls wear until their marriages, when they are allowed to don saris. The water urns were so heavy that I could not even lift one at a time with both hands, but Josephina was an expert at carrying them and she had a special walk to the rhythm of the Goan songs she sang in Konkoni, the local dialect. Benjamin was supposed to run our errands, go to market, sweep the floors, but since he was as active as the stray puppy he brought us as a present, he tracked more sand into the house than he swept away.

Benjamin and Josephina were our surrogate children. They taught us to cook over the logs on the stone stove, showed us how to clean rice, select vegetables from the hundreds of strange varieties in the market town two miles away, and took us fishing on a raft made from two mango tree logs tied together with jute. We taught Benjamin to swim and do arithmetic, and took Josephina to the Hindi movies in the tiny city of Mapusa. They sang all day and all night, ate with us on the veranda, told stories about cobra gods that live in fire, and lis-

tened to our stories in disbelief that any world existed beyond Bombay.

For Christmas dinner we hired a special cook who continued to work for us, when the mood struck him, for the rest of our stay. Victor had been the chef for an ambassador in Kuwait, and whenever he came he took over our huge but primitive kitchen, laying out the special spices he brought from Panjim and smiling proudly. He always carried a bottle of potent cashew whiskey, called fenny, in the hip pocket of his white shorts. Victor turned our dinners into seven-course feasts, creating on our stone stove chicken and cashew casseroles, garlicky scampi sizzling in butter, rice glowing in saffron and covered by the thinnest leaf of silver, hors d'oeuvres of miniature crustaceans, vegetable dishes of sixteen spices, salads bathed in lemon and fresh coriander, and delicate fillets of fish smothered in coconut. Benjamin scrambled up one of the trees in our grove, knife between his teeth, to hack down coconuts, which we spiked with fenny.

Victor's arrival always brought a conglomeration of dinner guests to our house. Sometimes we ate with the fishermen when they were not busy with their nets, or securing their huge wooden canoes for the changing tides, or chasing a school of fish through the waves. Hunkering together on the veranda, we learned to eat curry and rice by rolling the food into balls with our fingers. Afterwards one of the women began a song. A low, throaty note drifted out over the porch of our house, lingering in the warm air until it was almost tangible. The fronds of the coconut trees rattled with the first winds of evening that blew in from the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean, and the sands of Calangute Beach reflected orange from the setting sun. The singer accompanied herself on the keyboard of her antique harmonium, while her ten-year-old son played the tabla with his thumbs and fingers. His father sat smiling on a grass mat, eyes half closed, as if the music he had taught the son were perpetually new, just as every sunset was new and must be celebrated by an evening raga.

Other evenings, tourists we met came to sample Victor's cooking.

There were Russian officials and a German businessman, and an Italian woman photographer who always wore a long red caftan and bathed naked each sunrise in the Indian sea. A boy from Delhi who was writing Urdu poetry and hiding from his wealthy parents sang his verses to us whenever he visited. A couple on vacation from their coffee plantation in Mysore State brought us a sack of coffee beans, a bottle of Rémy Martin, and invited us to their home for a safari. Campers in Land Rovers from England and minibuses from Holland came and shared stories of their experiences driving overland.

Most of the time, however, we chose to fend for ourselves, and with the help of Benjamin and Josephina, we quickly felt like permanent residents of Calangute, Goa.

Josephina would slip into the house just after sunrise with urns of fresh water, on her way to the white steepled schoolhouse two miles inland. We bathed in the surf, cleaned the house, and argued with Benjamin, who always played hooky, and then let him accompany us on our long morning walks to market to buy the day's supplies.

The market itself was on a platform under thatching in the center of town, where farmers sold vegetables and fruit, mounds of shining red peppers and spices in metal trays. The air was alive with haggling over prices, phonograph music, and the sounds of flutes and nasal sopranos sliding off notes. The street was jammed with cows and chickens, and barefoot bicyclists in Western pants and dhotis. Flanking the narrow earthen road were flour and rice shops with their ancient scales and balances; tailors squatting in their wooden rooms, immersed in cloth and thread; a barber with a bronze tone mirror and an old ornate barber's chair; bicycle repair sheds; iron forgers; and an apothecary with vials of herbal medicine. Five or six teahouses sold Massala Dosa, a rice crepe stuffed with vegetables and spices, and milk shakes made in electric blenders from yogurt and fruit. The teahouses were filled with the sweet smoke of hashish and beedie cigarettes, and the dark quiet faces of men who spent all day hunched at the sticky, tea-stained tables.

Beyond the bazaar, the roads were a tangle of dense growth, banana trees and wild flowers. Thick carpets of Rousseauian green grasses spilled out of the parrot-filled jungle, obscuring footpaths and quicksilver brooks that sprang up from the rains. Deep within the jungle lived the woodcutter with his miniature temple. We stopped to see the progress of a box he was making for us to store our excess wardrobe.

A short cut through the woods led to a field of rice paddies worked by the white-robed nuns of a palatial convent. They sold us special cucumbers two feet long and tangy white radishes just plucked from the soil.

Scorched and tired, we would return home to bathe in the shower stall in the house, dipping coconut gourds into the water that stayed frigid in a huge iron pot. The water ran out of a hole in the floor of the cool stone stall, and like all our sewage was cleaned within an hour by the pigs which served as the entire sanitation department in Calangute Beach.

During the afternoon, the fishermen rested under little thatched lean-tos that scored the beach, knitting nets and eating bowls of peppery fish curry and dal covered with cashew. The women and girls sat about the courtyards and wells of the houses gossiping and playing with their almond-eyed babies. The merchants drifted among the houses, calling out their wares and stopping to chat. The postman with his official cap and khaki uniform wheeled his heavy black bicycle through the sand. The banana-cake man took recipes for apple pie and coffee cake for which we supplied the ingredients. A knife sharpener carrying a stone-age grinding wheel on his shoulders sat down in the sand to ply his levers and ropes on our iron implements, and an old blind flute player stopped unsmilingly on our porch and played songs he had learned on the road where his young sari-draped daughter led him, like Antigone and Oedipus, from Kashmir to Pondicherry and Bengal to Goa.

The whole of Calangute waited for sunset, when the fishermen climbed to the tops of the bluffs, shielding their eyes with their hands

against the sun. An old woman with rings on every finger and draped in chains came up to our house to tell our weekly fortunes. Her arms were fitted to the elbows with glass and gold bangles. She read our palms and opened a scarf filled with talismans. Around her neck she wore a rope of silver disks engraved with occult symbols and pictures of Hindu gods. Her tarot cards were carved in wood. The only problem was that no one could translate the Hindi dialect she whispered in a deep voice.

When the sun began to set, everyone on the beach could see the tide change, hear the first dark wave pound over the sands, feel the shift of wind. A cry went up from the highest bluff.

"Hey Mani num-sa," Benjamin's grandfather shouted, and we could see him stand among his nets as he waved his hands and pointed to a dark spot moving slowly across the sea.

"Hey Mani num-sa," the fishermen responded as they ran from their huts and houses. The ten-oar canoe was already anchored a hundred yards off the beach, piled high with nets and sharply silhouetted in the glare of sea and evening sun. The men ripped off their clothes and tore through the water toward the boat. Chanting the phrase that is so ancient no one could tell us the meaning of the words, they paddled the boat rhythmically in a slow, wide arc, dropping the nets and surrounding ten thousand flapping silver mackerel.

It was the first large run of the season, and the entire village was in a frenzy. The town merchants drove up with cartloads of Coca-Cola and huge clay jugs of cashew fenny were dragged onto the beach. Suddenly the gaslight man was bringing kerosene on credit to light the torches propped up along the beach. As the night grew chill the fishermen ran from the water to fill their insides with the warm alcohol, their skin glowing with salt in the light of the gas lanterns. Everyone came down to watch the men and their sons haul the fish onto the beach, until it seemed that the sands were alive and glittering with the movement of the silver fish. The wives waited in their saris and children ran about collecting the largest fish for their

families' consumption, and no one slept until the following day when the last fish had been wrested from the sea and the nets were again folded onto the canoe.

For the next month, no sooner was one catch sold in market than another took its place drying on the sand with a sweet musty odor. The young girls and women worked constantly, carting the fish away in huge baskets on their heads. Even the youngest girls, of five and six, stayed home from school to carry the mackerel.

Like so much of life in Goa, the methods of fishing have not changed in two thousand years. The dugout canoes, the long poled paddles sewn together with rope, the chanting and celebrating have been the same for centuries.

One day, just before our departure, Benjamin's grandfather, who

was the leader of his village, came to our house dejected and sad. He explained that trawlers were coming from Bombay and taking all the fish. Recently they had cut his people's nets, surely by accident, he hastened to add. We sent him to speak to the mayor of Calangute and helped him write letters to the local newspaper in Panjim, but it seemed a minor infraction, an inevitable result of the coming of the twentieth century to Goa. The government of India has plans to turn Calangute Beach into the Riviera of the Indian Ocean. Not far from our house a road was being constructed to bring the expected traffic from the airport, but beyond that, across the estuary from Calangute, lie hundreds of other beaches where roads and electricity are still a novelty to those who make the fishing hamlets their home.

MOVIES

RECYCLING COMEDY

by Joseph Kanon

The Marx Brothers' *Animal Crackers* (1930) has been re-released for the first time in eighteen years and since it is hilarious and zany and just about everything else a Marx Brothers movie should be, it has prompted the usual hand-wringing about the state of comedy in our times. Everyone feels that movies aren't very funny anymore, and they seem to get worse even as we expect less. We've become an audience grateful for small favors—a gag that carries a dull stretch, a bit with self-contained sparkle (Madelaine Kahn's parody of Dietrich in *Blazing Saddles*). This summer's new movies were probably no worse than last year's, but they were bad in a curious way: they seemed to have been made in the past. Watching all the car crashes, loopy grins, and sexy leers gives one the hazy, dislocating feeling of sitting through TV summer reruns—even when they're new, you feel you've seen them before.

And in some cases, of course, you have. Hollywood's current love affair with its past has been so commercially successful that it's threat-

ening to lock movies into a state of permanent hindsight. Certainly this summer's releases, from the *M*A*S*H* asterisks of *S*P*Y*S* to the far more successful recycling of Raymond Chandler in *Chinatown*, have been cannibal movies, soaking up the past like smudged carbon copies. And the process, if anything, is accelerating. Billy Wilder is re-making *The Front Page* (whose last incarnation was the 1940 *His Girl Friday*), Barbra Streisand is set to follow Janet Gaynor and Judy Garland in the third edition of *A Star Is Born* (this time as a rock musical), and if the previews of *The Towering Inferno* are any indication, the good ship *Poseidon* is gone but far from forgotten.

Hollywood has always had a touching belief in repeating past success, but recycling may prove to be a disaster for comedies because it runs on a collision course with just those elements that make comedy good in the first place: its spontaneity, its alertness to social behavior, the surprising way it can take an audience's concerns and throw them back with a curve. New

comedies aren't revitalized by old formulas, they're trapped in them, out of time, cranking machinery with imitation gags. When Peter Bogdanovich tried to revive screwball comedy in *What's Up, Doc?* he only made us nostalgic for the style and spirit of the real thing (*Bringing Up Baby*).

Comedy that borrows its conventions and tone from another time loses its basic connection, its familiarity, with the audience. The kind of immediacy that comedies of the 1930s and 40s shared with their audience exists now only with television—and at their best, shows such as *M*A*S*H*, *Mary Tyler Moore*, and *Carol Burnett* are crisp and alive in much the same way those movies were—because TV uses the audience (or its fantasies) as its material and moves with it. It builds comedy out of recognizable human behavior. The behavior in movies like *For Pete's Sake* or *S*P*Y*S* is recognizable all right but not in the streets or in our lives—we've seen it in countless old movies, when it was fresher and meant something. What's wrong with the recent comedies is not just that we're not in on the jokes, but that the movies aren't either. They're like people who can't remember why something was funny at a party last week but insist on telling us about it anyway.

It's rare to feel angry about a comedy that fails because even a bad one usually has enough goodwill or crude energy to show us it wants to be funny. *11 Harrowhouse*, a mild, harmless jewel-heist picture, and *The Mad Adventures of "Rabbi" Jacob*, a slapstick comedy of ethnic errors that was a big hit in France (and no more exportable than the English *Carry On* series), are not good movies by any means, but

they're not offensive. And Ken Shapiro's *The Groove Tube*, a loosely assorted group of skits about television, is actually funny, for all its flaws and vulgarity. The film looks as if it were stuck together with Elmer's Glue, but it moves with an energy and irreverence that make you laugh sometimes more than the material deserves (not to mention a hilarious final scene of Shapiro, in pink suit with briefcase, dancing down Sixth Avenue like Buddy Hackett doing Gene Kelly in one of the best send-ups of a movie musical ever).

But how is one to respond to *S*P*Y*S*, a relentlessly messy espionage-caper movie with Elliott Gould and Donald Sutherland mugging shamelessly around Europe like advertisements for the buddy system (the movie ends with them walking down the road singing "Side By Side") and rooting around for clues in dog turds? Or *For Pete's Sake*, which wastes Barbra Streisand's rare talent in another attempt to revive screwball comedy, this time coated with the cosmeticized lechery of the early sixties (the script is by Stanley Shapiro and Maurice Richlin, who wrote some of the Doris Day vehicles). What are we meant to laugh at here? Molly Picon as a Jewish mother, with a call-girl racket on the side? A showpiece joke about furniture in plastic slipcovers (for social satire) that's so old even television wouldn't touch it? *99 and 44/100% Dead*, which is being billed as a campy pop-art look at gang warfare, promises a glossy sixties entertainment (*Charade*, et al) with its Lichtenstein-like titles and Henry Mancini music, but inside it's the same old dumb brutality—shoot some people, smash some Cadillacs—that passes for crime melodrama these days. The kinky joke here, incidentally, is a sadist with an artificial hand who can clip on feather ticklers and whips to terrorize prostitutes.

The one contemporary touch all these movies have grafted onto the old formulas is the ugly hangover of sixties comedy by assault. They want to be daring, they want to outrage us to laughter. But it's a double-edged humor—when it misses, it really misses, the way a Don Rickles insult can sometimes turn just nasty—and outrage is

harder to come by now. *Andy Warhol's Frankenstein* (directed by Paul Morrissey) has been called a statement about the absurdity of the obscenity laws—no sex this time, *real* obscenity—so the usual Warhol boredom is now spiced with a mad doctor who gets sexually excited by fondling his patients' internal organs through their surgical incisions, and kidneys flung at us in 3-D, but whom is the movie trying to reach—the Georgia judges who got so worked up over *Carnal Knowledge*? *Frankenstein* wants to go that outrageous one step further, but it's all so silly, like Margaret O'Brien's Tootie during the Halloween scene in *Meet Me in St. Louis* when she screams, "I'm the most horrible! I'm the most horrible!"

What's missing from these daring comedies is any sense of what comedy's all about, the generosity of high spirits. It's what draws us back to old movies, and it's about all that saves *Uptown Saturday Night* from Sidney Poitier's direction (and performance) and lets it soar when the good bits come along: Richard Pryor's shifty private eye, Harry Belafonte's takeoff on Brando's Godfather, Bill Cosby's patter. Actors like Pryor and Cosby have the right style for new screen comedy—the audience feels at ease with them, alert to what they're doing—but there isn't going to be much place for them in the long reach back to recycled "entertainment." Given the overwhelming competition from television, it may be that comedy in movies will only survive in films that aren't really comedies at all, but more sophisticated mixes of experience. *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, for example, a Canadian film written by Mordecai Richler from his novel, is a shrewder look at the Jerome Weidman, early Harold Robbins world of ghetto hustlers who lose the best of themselves on their way to the best of everything, and it's funny in ways that are surprising in a morality story. *Duddy Kravitz* is the kind of film in which lovers run through fields and the sad-sack friend is epileptic, but the movie has a hectic, ironic touch (as opposed to the angry John Garfield approach it might have taken), and a scheme to film bar mitzvahs for profit reaches into high comedy

RELAXED ISLAND TROPADISE—

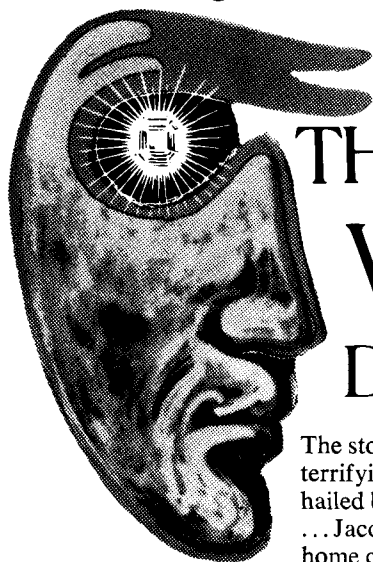


Motel rooms, efficiencies, endless beach, pool. Write Rod and Ruth Happel, Caribe Adventure Inn, Box 158T, Sanibel Island, Fla. 33957.

when the drunken avant-garde documentary-maker alternates shots of the relatives with footage from Zulu tribal rites and a circumcision ceremony, leaving his customers gasping.

Even more interesting, however, is Paul Mazursky's *Harry and Tonto*, certainly the most original and best-acted movie of the new releases. Mazursky is one of the few American directors who has been working toward a personal comic style, and he has turned this unlikely material—a widower (Art Carney) in his seventies, evicted from his New York apartment, takes off across the country with his cat, Tonto—into one of the most affecting movies ever made about aging, without preaching or condescension. Mazursky isn't sentimental (you can see what a pain Harry would be with the damn cat) and he isn't cruel: even his caricatures are rounded out with understanding. His movies (*Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice*, *Alex in Wonderland*, *Blume in Love*) have always had a sketchy flavor to them, like brisk walks through the yellow pages of contemporary life (he once worked as part of the Second City troupe), and sometimes the episodes don't come off—a jail scene with Chief Dan George plays like a talk-show bit—but Mazursky's a prodger, he's always trying to get at something, and when his scenes jell, they're remarkable: an impromptu soft-shoe with a black janitor friend; a tense dinner with his son's family (one of the kids is on a macrobiotic diet and observing an Oriental vow of silence); thoughtless incontinence at a Las Vegas casino. *Harry and Tonto* is a movie about loneliness and disappointment, but so knowing about people and the way they behave that in its quiet way it's more richly comic than most of the sidesplitters on the screen. In one of the film's best moments, Harry goes to a nursing home to look up an old girlfriend (Geraldine Fitzgerald); vague and eccentric, she doesn't recognize him, but they begin to dance in the recreation room, and the scene, against all odds, becomes sharp and beautiful, a moment away from time. The movie is like that, gentle and funny and intelligent, snapshots of life whose humor is that of a man with his eyes wide open.

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by Michael Collins

Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$10.00

They were an elite group of thirty members: the seven astronauts selected for Mercury, the nine for Gemini, and the fourteen, sometimes erroneously called the Apollo astronauts. The ablest of them would test the approaches to and make the final assault on the moon, in response to President Kennedy's special message to Congress of May 25, 1961: "I believe this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth. No single project in this period will be more impressive to mankind, or more important for the long-range exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish." Most of these men were graduates of our service academies; many were test pilots who loved to fly, though they were not so keen "to be locked up in a can and shot around the world." But when in February of 1962 John Glenn circled the globe three times in *Friendship 7*, once each ninety minutes, and came down to tell us about it in his graphic, candid words, it brought Kennedy's moon closer.

The original seven had completed the Mercury flights and the second group of astronauts were at work on Gemini, the linking of two spaceships, before Mike Collins, a certified test pilot determined to be one of the lunar landers, was finally summoned to the Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston. His account of the five years that went into the testing of the men for Apollo, the designing of the spaceship and equipment, the apprehension of what might go wrong is a magnificent piece of exposition alive with humor, candid in its anxiety, very sensitive in its appreciation of the men involved. During the long preparation, four astronauts were to lose their lives in flying; three were killed in the most serious failure,

the launching-pad fire, and one in a highway accident.

At the outset of the program the one thought was how to put a live man on the moon, and in the early stages had anyone suggested that astronauts on the moon's surface would leave the lunar module unattended, climb into a jeep, and drive off for a couple of miles, he would have been considered, as the author says, "a weirdo." Twenty-three astronauts were involved in the final phase, and Collins gives a frank man-to-man estimate of each. He is equally frank about the medics, whose worries he did not accept: "The truth of the matter," he writes, "is that the space program would be precisely where it is today had medical participation in it been zero." Part of the success of both Gemini and Apollo he attributes to the fact that in the formative stages, there were changes in design based on what the potential crew members had to say. Thus each of the fourteen Apollo astronauts was polled as to what specific responsibilities he thought he was best qualified to study. Buzz Aldrin, for example, had specialized in mission planning, Walt Cunningham in electrical and sequential nonflight experiments, and Collins himself in the design and safety of the pressure suits.

What is remarkable, when one considers the immensity of the program, is the accuracy of the engineering and the calm composure with which the men did their jobs. On their return from the moon, Collins says that the "allowable limits were spectacularly small, the atmospheric 're-entry corridor,' or zone of survivability, was only sixty miles thick, and hitting a sixty-mile target from 230,000 miles is like trying to split a human hair with a razor blade thrown from a distance of forty feet." What Collins clarifies so well are the alternatives and what the astronauts called "work arounds," when a stubborn problem must be bypassed. When, with the help of powerful tracking radars coupled to gigantic computers, the

danger was past, Collins helped himself to some spoonfuls of chicken soup, unfolding a tube through which he worked up the ambrosia. "My compliments to the chef," he said to the Houston center. "The food is outstanding." Before the Apollo flights, each man was asked to name the two others he would most like to have with him. Small wonder that Mike was chosen.

This is a splendid and affirmative book which tells the nation of the amazingly precise training these men went through and of what they endured. In his foreword Colonel Lindbergh calls it a "superhuman accomplishment," says he himself felt a superhuman being in those chapters when he accompanied Collins, Armstrong, and Aldrin on their moon flight. Still, I cannot help wondering what one twentieth of this skill and dedication might have done for our railroads down here on earth.

RUSSIAN DIARY

by Charlotte Y. Salisbury

Walker, \$6.95

Most of the impressions of the Soviet Union have been written by men. The special virtue of Mrs. Salisbury's diary is that we see the Russian people and the system which governs them through the eyes of an honest, civilized American woman. True she had a latch-key: for four and a half years her husband, Harrison Salisbury, had represented the *New York Times* in Moscow, and his friends among the Russian intelligentsia helped in the preparation of his classic, *The 900 Days: The Siege of Leningrad*. But Charlotte Salisbury's yardstick is her own, and with it she measures woman's place in Russia, and the freedom, or lack of it, she encountered on repeated visits. Like her husband, she had her intimate friends whose confidence she does not betray, and like most of us who have spent time in the Russian cities and countryside, her remembrance is a mixture of affection, anger, and mystification.

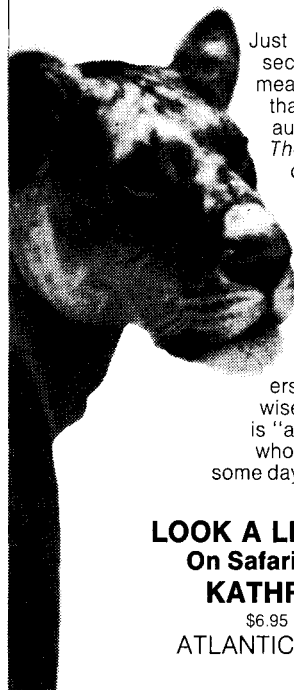
At the time of her first visit to Moscow, Svetlana Allilueva had just defected. As the author puts it, "she merely packed a small bag, called a taxi, drove to the American embassy [in New Delhi],

and walked up those wide impressive steps into freedom." The Salisburys' Russian friends could not understand it: some thought Svetlana had been bribed by the CIA; all called it a tragedy. This leads the diarist to discuss others who had defied the system: the popular dancer who had been jailed for eight years, the brilliant biologist Zhores Medveydev, whose dissent landed him in a mental hospital from which, through the intervention of other scientists, he was released and exiled to London. Her interest in the dissenters was matched by the Russians' interest in American assassinations. The Russians are convinced that JFK's assassination and the shooting of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King was a plot, a belief which the Salisburys encountered in Asia, too, and one which they could not alter. "I don't believe" she writes, "that there has ever been an American family that appealed so to foreigners as the Kennedys."

Mrs. Salisbury, the mother of four and grandmother of five, compares her daily life and housework in Manhattan with that of her Russian contemporaries. The more successful have moved from cramped quarters into small cooperative apartments which they own, but she observes how long and tediously they have to queue up for food and clothing; "most Russian women in the city" she writes, "have jobs outside the home," and if they are married, are dependent on the nurseries for the care of their young. For most the goal is a husband, and the government pays a bonus for up to nine children. She notes that women excel in medicine and law but have only a small part in the Party structure.

The Salisburys have learned by experience to be patient travelers in the authoritarian state. Charlotte admires the shrines such as the great monastery at Zagorsk, which has been fastidiously restored and now houses a wonderful collection of folk art—and the filthiest public toilet in the USSR. She is captivated by the Bolshoi and the Russian circus, indisputably the best in the world; she tells of their clandestine picnics when the police were forever ordering them away from what they had thought were picnic

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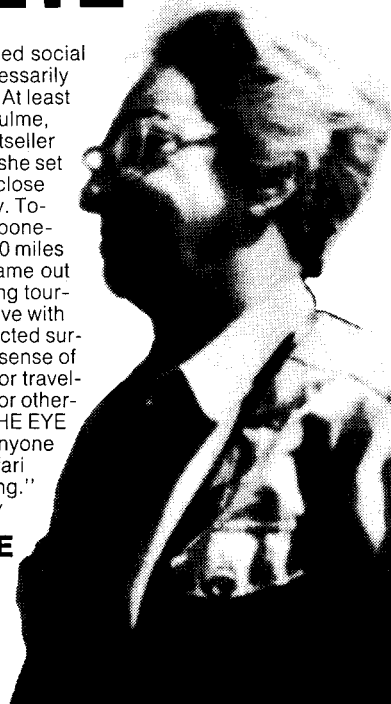


Just because you've reached social security age doesn't necessarily mean you should stay put. At least that's the way Kathryn Hulme, author of the famed bestseller *The Nun's Story*, felt. So she set out on safari with two close friends, both over sixty. Together they took a bone-shaking tour of 2,500 miles into Africa—and came out with a breathtaking tour-guide/memoir, alive with animal lore, unexpected surprises, and a sheer sense of wonder and beauty. For travelers of any age (armchair or otherwise), **LOOK A LION IN THE EYE** is "a zestful chronicle... Anyone who ever hopes to try a safari some day will find it must reading."

—Publishers Weekly

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grounds. She describes "the contagion of bureaucratic power"; the small indignities imposed on citizen and tourist alike; how repression has hardened since the days of Khrushchev, and yet how among the Russian people there is still gladness at the sight of a visiting American couple. As they were leaving a lovely old brick church, where they had paused before the icons and relics, the caretaker said quietly, "Please tell the people in America that we don't want to have war"; and in the same spirit one of Mrs. Salisbury's friends urged, "Please go back and write about our life the way it is so people will know how bad it is for us." So she has.

THE CONNOISSEUR

by Evan S. Connell, Jr.
Knopf, \$6.95

The Connoisseur did not intend to be one. Mr. Muhlbach, a fastidious widower, with two children and a fussy housekeeper, has arrived at midlife with a Manhattan veneer protecting his private commitments. He is rather bored with the insurance business, at which he has prospered, and while on a trip looking into a possible merger in the Southwest, his fancy is attracted by a small terra-cotta figure, said to be of Mayan origin, in a curiosity shop. He knows nothing of pre-Columbian culture, but the atmosphere of Taos, where he has paused between flights, and the intriguing hints of Mrs. Soquel, the shopkeeper, make him susceptible and he buys the diminutive personage for \$30. Is it a fake or authentic? Carrying his trophy—Mrs. Soquel has called it "a Jaina"—in a cigar box, Mr. Muhlbach decides to stop at the University of Albuquerque and try to have it checked. So begins his impulsive excursion into the mystery of Mayan antiquities.

His infatuation with his figurine—nobleman, magistrate, or priest?—his feeling of triumph on learning that he has captured not a copy but an original, are exciting: "I've learned just enough to be irritated by my ignorance," he thinks to himself as he enters the maze. He begins to read the famous archaeologists; is edged along by fellow collectors; tries to interest his children in his

new realm, totally without success; and in defiance of his habitual caution, decides to attend the next big auction in New York. It is a bizarre affair, beautifully described: in his preliminary scouting Mr. Muhlbach has determined to bid on an Olmec mask, which he is convinced is a masterpiece. The auctioneer starts by asking \$1000, and when eventually Muhlbach's offer of \$92.50 is accepted, people turn around to stare at him. And again his quest for identification, now tested by the skepticism of the dealers, leads him still deeper into the insatiable lust of the collector.

This is a deft, sophisticated, and pleasurable story, dominated by an engaging man, and of fascination to those who enjoy the half-solved mysteries of our earliest American culture.

RETREAT FROM LOVE: A NOVEL

by Colette
Bobbs-Merrill, \$7.95

THE EVENING STAR: RECOLLECTIONS

by Colette
Bobbs-Merrill, \$6.95

Both books, which have been translated for the first time into English, remind us of what a charmer Colette was. The novel, published in France in 1907, is youthful, episodic, hinting at more than she has the power to deliver; it was written after she had separated from her first husband, "Willy," her rather dominating collaborator in all her early books. She could break with him but not with the characters that they had established in the Claudine stories, and here they are again with such emphasis as Colette gives them on her own: Claudine, zestful, inquisitive, amorous, feigning passion for her absent invalid husband (whom the reader never believes in), sending money to their no-good homosexual son, and pumping her adventurous, submissive friend Annie for the juicier confidences of Annie's love life. The atmosphere is provincial, the style and the perfect word still to come.

The Evening Star, published in 1946, is Colette's wise and rich rumination, a little gem of a memoir, the style honed by anger and suffering. During the 1500 days of the German Occupation, Colette was

housebound in the red room—red wallpaper, the double doors covered with red satin, red covers for armchair and bed—of her apartment in the Palais-Royale. A hip injury leading to arthritis held her body captive, but her mind was clear, contemplative, and defiant. Here she was tended by her third husband until he was deported to the wretched internment camp at Compiègne; here she was visited by German intruders, black marketeers, members of the Resistance, and friends of the Académie Goncourt. "As age advances," she writes, "it's not a bad idea to grant insomnia its rights," and on the bed table which straddled her couch, to combat the nightmare of her husband's absence, she composed these reflections of her past and present. Her sentences sparkle as she recalls September in Brittany with Germaine Beaumont, or the delicious couscous the Armenians prepared for her in Tunis; there is laughter in her depiction of the eccentricities of French writers, and triumph as she remembers how she forced her way into the malicious masculine Paris journalism of 1912. She was a fighter, and she smiles as she recalls Gordon Bennett's witticism, "The best way to triumph over one's adversary is to survive him."

LIFE & LETTERS CONTRIBUTORS

Richard Todd is an associate editor of *The Atlantic*.

Linda Shah is co-author of a forthcoming novel, *Refugee*.

Joseph Kanon, Edward Weeks, and Phoebe Adams appear regularly in these pages.

POETS IN THIS ISSUE

Irving Feldman (page 49) is on the English faculty of the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Robert Fitzgerald's (page 50) translation of *The Iliad* will be published in October.

Marge Piercy (page 56) is a novelist and poet whose latest novel is *Small Changes* and latest book of poetry is *To Be of Use*.

Robert Graves' (page 85) *Difficult Questions, Easy Answers*, a book of essays, appeared last year.

SHORT REVIEWS: BOOKS

by Phoebe Adams

ALL SAID AND DONE by Simone de Beauvoir. Putnam's, \$10.00. The latest volume of Ms. de Beauvoir's memoirs contains lively opinions about the world, interesting portraits of notable friends, less interesting reports of travels here and there, and far too many pages that appear to result from nothing more than simultaneous possession of a typewriter and total recall. Translated by Patrick O'Brien.

THE SECRET GLASS by Beryl Bainbridge. Braziller, \$5.95. The doings of an almost unbelievably dreary and inhibited English family during the Second World War slowly work around to a conclusion which the experienced domestic-horror buff will, unfortunately, have foreseen.

IN SEARCH OF LAKE MONSTERS by Peter Costello. Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, \$8.95. Mr. Costello collects all the significant information available to date on the Loch Ness creature. He then goes on to reports of similar phenomena from North and South America, Scandinavia, and points east. The pleasantly written conglomeration provides the foundation for Mr. Costello's own theory as to what the monster (if any—the author is a firm believer) really is; the Loch Ness observers are, in his opinion, altogether on the wrong track. Bibliography, index, illustrations, the last no more satisfactory than usual.

FOUR MASTERWORKS OF AMERICAN INDIAN LITERATURE edited by John Bierhorst. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$12.95. The book contains the Aztec myth of Quetzalcoatl, the Ritual of Condolence through which the Iroquois both mourned the death of a chief and installed his successor, a Mayan political tirade disguised as a prophetic calendar, and a Navajo religious and therapeutic ceremony called The Night Chant. Not easy reading, what with unpronounceable names and inexplicable gods, but Mr. Bierhorst's commentaries and notes are of great help, revealing as

they do the complex and sophisticated meanings underlying the literal text. The purpose of the collection is to present these Indian works as literature, and in this it is successful. All of the pieces are unquestionably works of art. Maps, index, bibliography.

THE MYSTIC ADVENTURES OF ROXIE STONER by Berry Morgan. Houghton Mifflin, \$5.95. Roxie, the narrator of these interlocked short stories, is black and articulate, but so thoroughly honest, patient, and kind-hearted that she is locally considered to be weak in the head. If inability to understand vulgar reality is the criterion for intelligence, Roxie is indeed weak in the head, but she is also a most delightful companion and guide through the intricacies of King County, Mississippi. The book is a delicate, ironic put-on, for the author's actual purpose is to describe a general, vicious decline in morality and manners. Seen through Roxie's unworldly eyes, the nasty view becomes comic.

FIVE DECADES: A Selection (Poems: 1925-1970) by Pablo Neruda. Grove, \$12.50 and \$3.95. Edited and translated by Ben Belitt with an introduction by Luis Monguió. Neruda was a splendid poet, a fact which Mr. Belitt's translations tend to conceal. However, this edition is bilingual.

ROSS AND TOM by John Leggett. Simon and Schuster, \$10.00. Ross Lockridge and Tom Heggen both came from the Midwest; each hit the jackpot with his first book; each died shortly afterward, Lockridge by suicide, Heggen by what could technically be called accident. "Yet as men," Mr. Leggett points out, "they could not have been more different." And there is the trouble with this "dual biography"; no amount of devoted hard work or amateur psychologizing by Mr. Leggett can create any significant connection between the lives, or the work, or the deaths of Heggen and Lockridge.

AND THE LAND PROVIDES by Lael Morgan. Doubleday, \$10.00. Ms. Morgan is an inquisitive and venturesome journalist. Once she became curious about the Indian and

Eskimo groups in Alaska, she arranged to go out and live among them, hoping to learn what they think about the American activities that have turned the place, from their viewpoint, topsy-turvy, and how they propose to cope. She has produced a sympathetic report on living conditions, economic problems, traditional skills, and new practices, plus conversations with a small army of tough, resourceful, humorous, intelligent people. She does not draw conclusions or offer prophecies—sensibly, for the Alaskans themselves are still puzzled about what goals they should work toward. Photographs.

BEHIND THE TRAIL OF BROKEN TREATIES by Vine Deloria, Jr. Delacorte, \$8.95 and \$2.95. The author begins with a history of the various court actions by which Indian tribes have sought, usually with small success, to preserve the rights of property and self-government promised them by treaty with the Great White Father. Some of the information will be familiar to most readers, some of it will almost certainly be new. Mr. Deloria points out that Indians will continue litigation as long as the wind blows and the rivers run. He concludes with some sensible proposals for bringing the whole ill-tempered, inconvenient, and expensive ruckus to an end.

THE WAR BETWEEN THE TATES by Alison Lurie. Random House, \$6.95. Mrs. Tate is a conscientious if somewhat chilly wife; Mr. Tate is a professor with middle-aged itch. There is a female graduate student, naturally. They all do their thing at rather too much length, but the book does contain a couple of memorably funny set pieces, and the student is a quite marvelous caricature. Ms. Lurie has managed to fit together, in one awful wench, every characteristic that has ever maddened a college administrator.

THE NOTHING BOOK by anybody. Harmony, Crown, \$3.00. 192 blank pages—the ultimate in the do-it-yourself fad.

Two stories from FAMILY AFFAIRS by John L'Heureux (Doubleday \$6.95.) originally appeared in *The Atlantic*.

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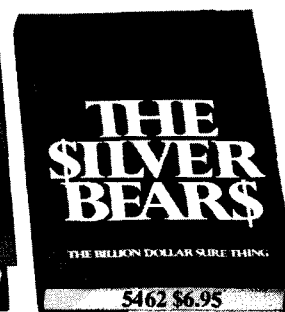
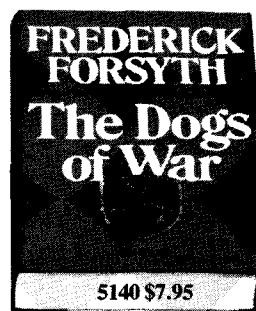
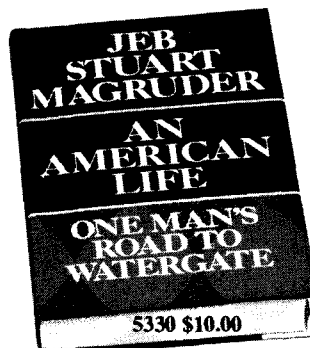
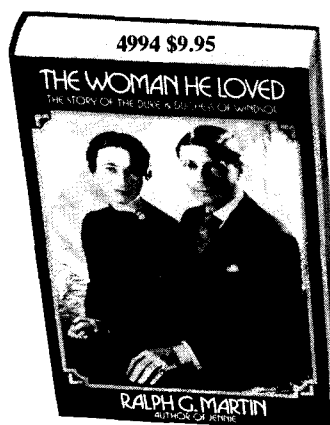
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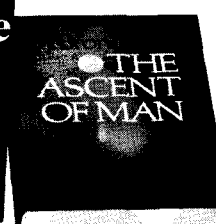
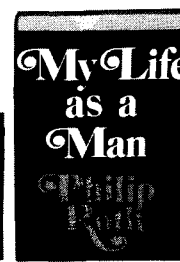
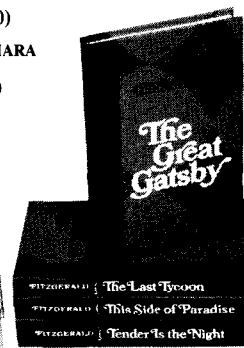
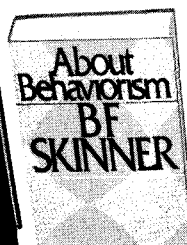
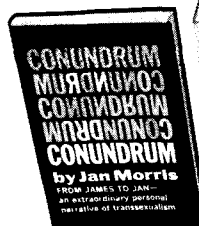
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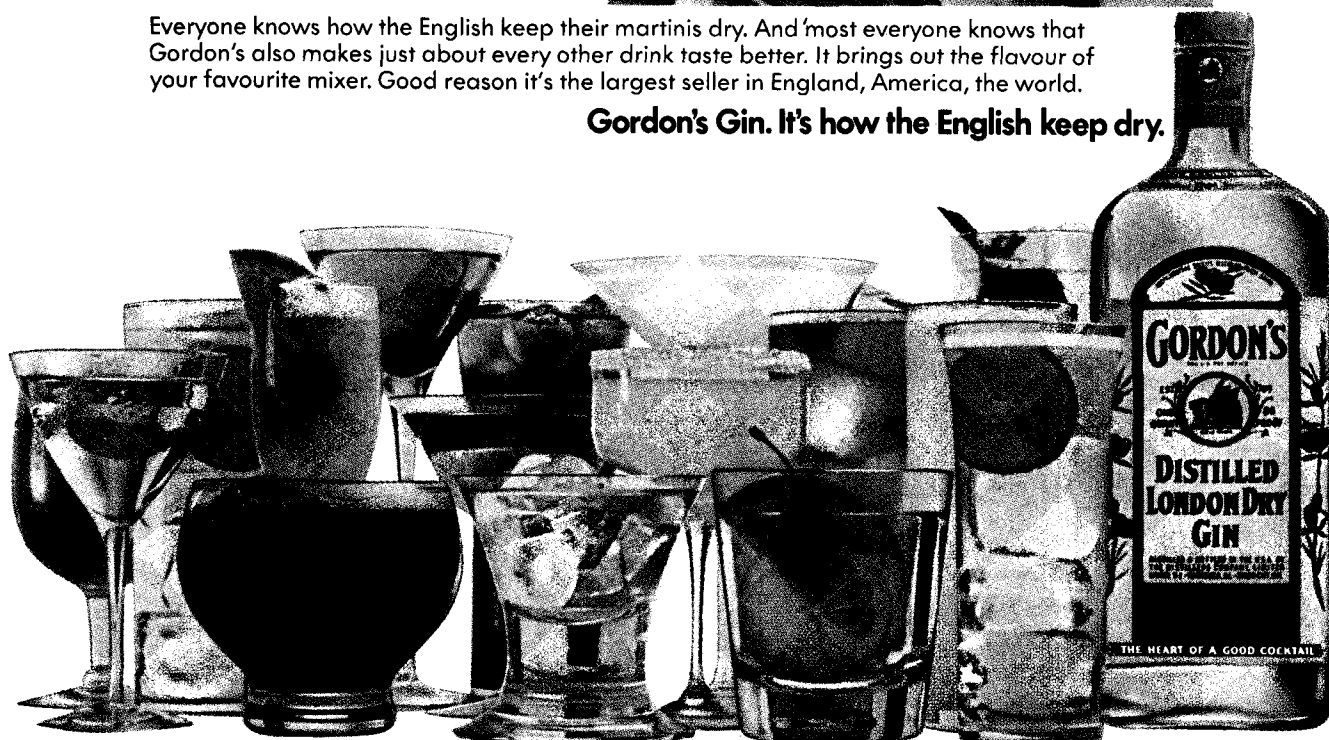
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